

**State of Alaska
FY2004 Governor's Operating Budget**

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

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.

BRU Services Provided

In this budget request, the Division of Alaska State Troopers is restructuring the VPSO budget components to allow for more effective financial management. The budget request unit (BRU) has been reduced from three components to two components that provide direct grant funding and grant management support to the VPSO program. The two remaining components are VPSO Contracts and VPSO Support. With this restructuring the division is transferring 18 commissioned officers and civilians from VPSO Support and VPSO Administration to the AST Detachments component where they will continue to perform all support, training and oversight they have historically provided to the VPSO program, in addition to their other law enforcement duties. This budget restructuring will not change the level of service provided to the public or to the program.

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 duties, probation and parole 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-five rural communities. VPSOs also often assist troopers in alcohol and drug enforcement efforts.

Detachment troopers travel regularly to all villages under their oversight. During these visits troopers provide training through special VPSO training manuals 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 regional non-profit corporations that share in direction of VPSO's daily activities with community leaders and troopers. VPSOs prevent child abuse, prevent domestic violence, reduce aggravated assaults, prevent injuries, save lives and protect property in rural Alaska.

The services provided by the VPSO Contracts component include the funding for the grants to the non-profits who manage and implement the VPSO program. The services now provided by the VPSO Support component include those specifically associated with the management of the VPSO grants. This includes a Sergeant position that coordinates and provides training, purchases equipment and supplies for the VPSO officers. The Accounting Technician position provides financial support ensuring reimbursement for services provided by the grantees.

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 first responder criminal investigation involving misdemeanor and some felony property crime investigations;

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

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

Key BRU Issues for FY2003 – 2004

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 2002, the correctional officer is making \$16.03 and the VPSO \$13.73 (based on the lowest amount paid by one of nine non-profits and including an estimated pay increase for probation and parole duties) starting out.

BUDGET STRUCTURE CHANGES - Moving 14 commissioned officers from the VPSO Support and VPSO Administration components to AST Detachments more clearly reflects the duties that these officers are assigned and will allow the division to more effectively manage its budget. Primarily these officers are C Detachment troopers with many duties in addition to support of the VPSO program. Commissioned officers in the other AST Detachments also provide support to VPSOs whenever needed as displayed in the following tables for FY2001 and FY2002. The department plans to continue this level of support to the program, and will continue to track support that is provided to VPSOs in the Officer Activity Reporting System.

In FY2001, 209 troopers across the following AST Detachments provided support to VPSOs as follows:

FY2001				
Detachment	Region	Sergeant/ Troopers	Hours	VPSOs Supported
A	Southeast	15	607.0	5
B	Southcentral	40	596.5	3
C	Northwest & Western	42	12,915.0	42
D	Northern	50	864.5	12
E	Peninsula	29	31.0	4
H	HQ/Academy	6	127.0	2
I	Statewide -CIB/SDEU	27	225.5	4
		209	15,366.5	72

In FY2002, 220 troopers across the following AST Detachments provided support to VPSOs as follows:

FY2002				
Detachment	Region	Troopers	Hours	VPSO Supported
A	Southeast	15	365.0	7
B	Southcentral	41	22.5	1
C	Northwest & Western	47	12,379.0	47
D	Northern	52	578.5	11
E	Peninsula	29	109.5	2
H	HQ/Academy	7	302.5	1
I	Statewide -CIB/SDEU	29	221.5	2
		220	13,978.5	71

Major BRU Accomplishments in 2002

REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER PROGRAM - The RPSO program began mid FY2002 with the training of four officers. Three of the officers have begun their law enforcement career in the communities of Unalakleet, Iliamna and McGrath). The fourth officer was called to military duty and the position left vacant.

PROBATION & PAROLE SERVICES - The VPSO probation and parole training started in October and concluded in

January. All VPSOs employed by the nine non-profit organization attended the training. The training was also provided to new VPSO attending the VPSO Academy in Sitka. The program has been very successful, the VPSO have developed a good working relationship with their Probation & Parole oversights and monitor offenders in their communities on a regular basis.

RURAL ENFORCEMENT EFFORT - Provided by a combination of troopers from the VPSO support and AST Detachment component:

VPSO FY2002 Statistics

- 772 VPSO Visits
- 365 Village Police Officer (VPO) visits/contacts (VPOs are employed by some rural villages)
- 1,798 Investigative visits to villages
- 648 Overnight visits were accomplished
- 959 Training hours conducted by oversight troopers

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

All dollars in thousands

	FY2002 Actuals				FY2003 Authorized				FY2004 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
<u>Formula Expenditures</u>												
None.												
<u>Non-Formula Expenditures</u>												
VPSO Contracts	5,925.4	0.0	81.0	6,006.4	6,398.4	0.0	0.0	6,398.4	6,398.4	0.0	0.0	6,398.4
Support	2,247.2	0.0	0.0	2,247.2	2,189.8	0.0	0.0	2,189.8	246.1	0.0	109.6	355.7
Administration	253.7	0.0	0.0	253.7	187.8	0.0	0.0	187.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Totals	8,426.3	0.0	81.0	8,507.3	8,776.0	0.0	0.0	8,776.0	6,644.5	0.0	109.6	6,754.1

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Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2004

The Division of Alaska State Troopers is transferring most of the commissioned officers and civilians from VPSO Support and VPSO Administration to the AST Detachments component. This transfer more clearly reflects the varied duties that these officers are assigned. Primarily they are C Detachment troopers with many duties in addition to support of the VPSO program. Commissioned officers in all of the other AST Detachments also provide support to VPSOs whenever needed. There is no change in the level of service provided under the VPSO program in FY2004, even though budget transfers have occurred to allow for more effective financial management of the division.

The costs that will remain in the VPSO BRU include the grants to the non-profits, VPSO officer liability insurance, VPSO officer travel, VPSO academy costs, VPSO officer uniforms and the two positions that provide direct support to the VPSO program.

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Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component

From FY2003 Authorized to FY2004 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2003 Authorized	8,776.0	0.0	0.0	8,776.0
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Support	-1,943.7	0.0	0.0	-1,943.7
-Administration	-187.8	0.0	0.0	-187.8
Proposed budget increases:				
-Support	0.0	0.0	109.6	109.6
FY2004 Governor	6,644.5	0.0	109.6	6,754.1