

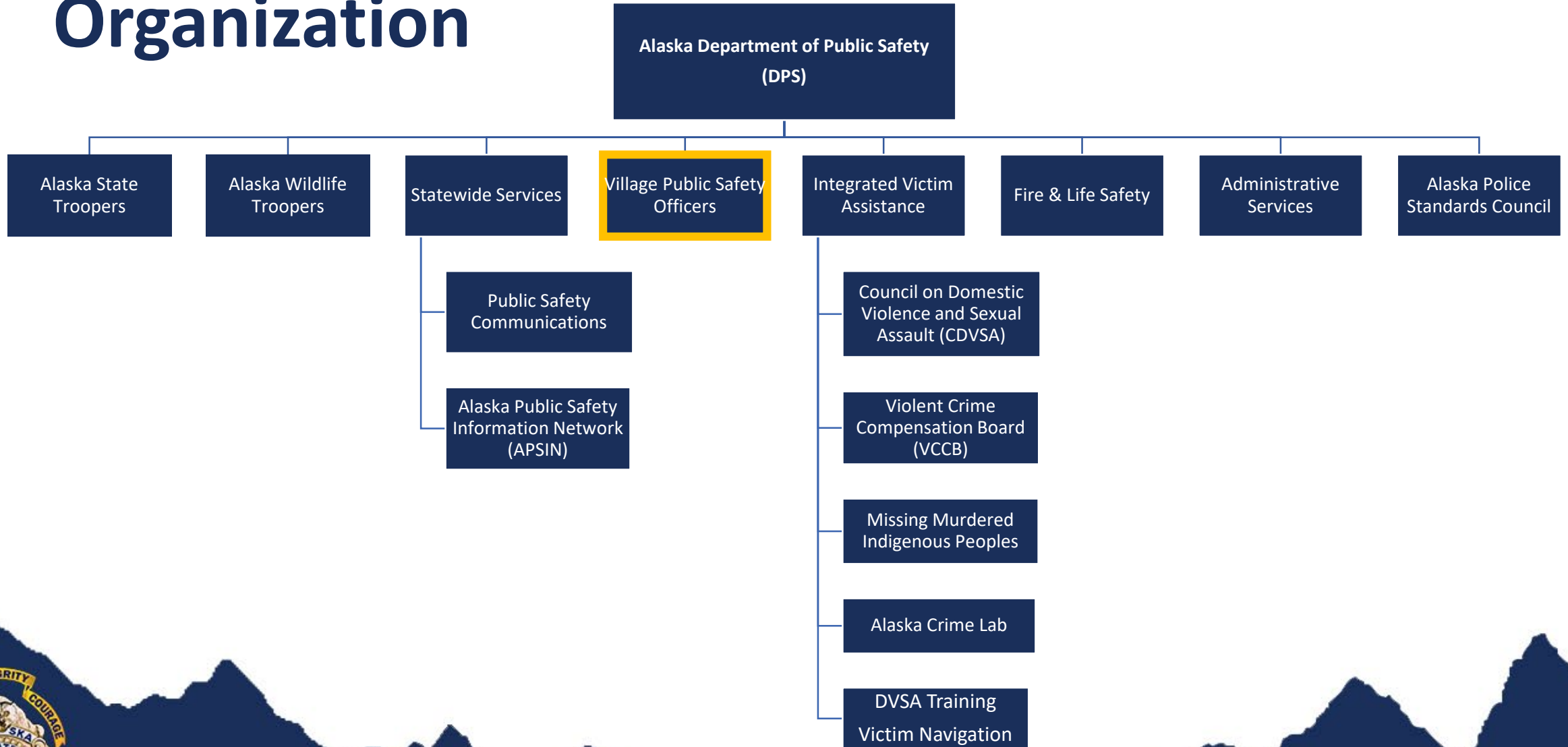
Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs) and Department Engagement with Communities

Commissioner James Cockrell
Deputy Commissioner Leon Morgan

February 4, 2025



Organization



Regional Public Safety Officer (RPSO)

AS 18.65.680

The commissioner of public safety may appoint regional public safety officers to

- (1) provide an expanded public safety and law enforcement presence in rural areas of the state;
- (2) provide oversight and training for the village public safety officer program;
- (3) administer functions relating to
 - (A) protecting life and property in the rural areas of the state;
 - (B) conducting investigations;
 - (C) conducting search and rescue missions;
 - (D) conducting local training programs in drug and alcohol awareness and prevention, water safety, and gun safety;
 - (E) perform other duties relating to public safety as directed by the commissioner.



Regional Public Safety Officer (RPSO)

Legislative Intent Language

SB 281 (Chapter 11 SLA 22)

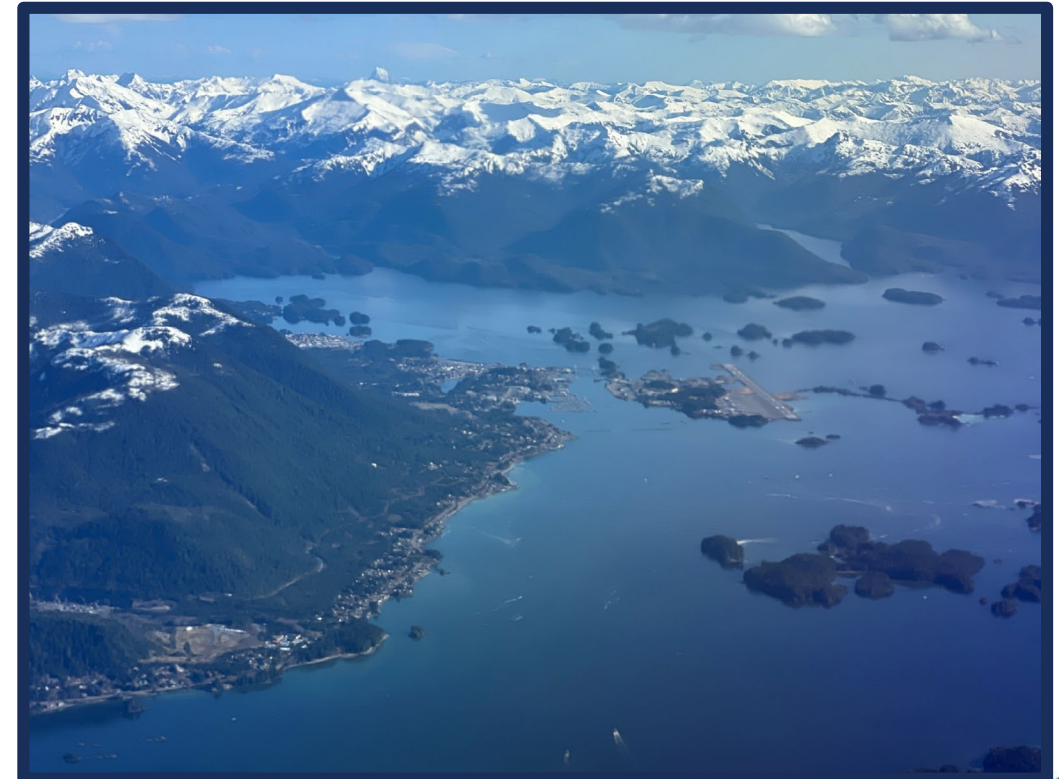
It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Public Safety work in conjunction with each Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program grantee's leadership to improve program recruitment and retention, to provide greater spending flexibility, and to identify regional training opportunities.

The Department should refine the standards of VPSOs to expand upon eligibility and better define essential functions and other responsibilities that distinguish varying support of village public safety needs.

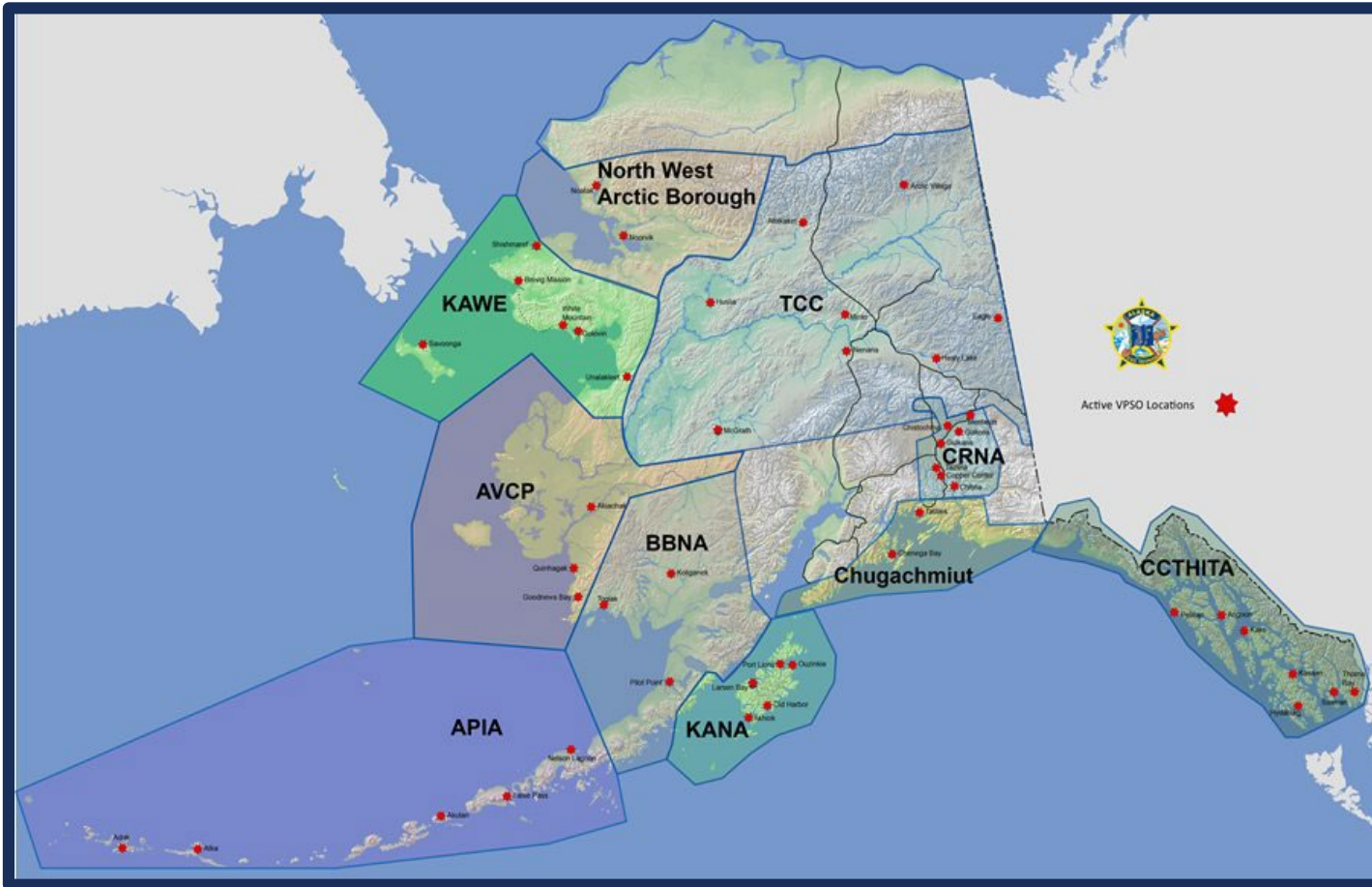
The Department shall work with grantees to utilize grant funds and/or contributions from tribal governments, local governments, and regional Native Corporations to support hiring and retention incentives.



Alaska Law Enforcement Training (ALET) Academy



VPSO Grantee Regions



- Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association – **APIA**
- Association of Village Council Presidents – **AVCP**
- Bristol Bay Native Association – **BBNA**
- Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska – **CCHITA**
- Chugachmiut
- Copper River Native Association – **CRNA**
- Kawerak, Inc. – **KAWE**
- Kodiak Area Native Association – **KANA**
- Northwest Arctic Borough
- Tanana Chiefs Conference – **TCC**



Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Division

Accomplishments

- 50% growth FY2021 to FY2025
- Implementation of Regional Public Safety Officer (RSPO) program
- 80% VPSO graduation rate and retention rate

Program Status

- \$22,337.5 awarded in FY25 (\$ in thousands)
- 10 grantees, agreements with 156 villages
- 85 VPSOs in 65 communities

Challenges

- Funding Limitations
- Strain on Division Staffing
- Infrastructure Challenges
- Recruitment and Retention



VPSO VIDEO PLACEHOLDER



Collaboration

Village Public Safety Officers and Tribal Liaisons



Thank You



Commissioner James Cockrell

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