



THE STATE
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Public Safety

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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February 13, 2018

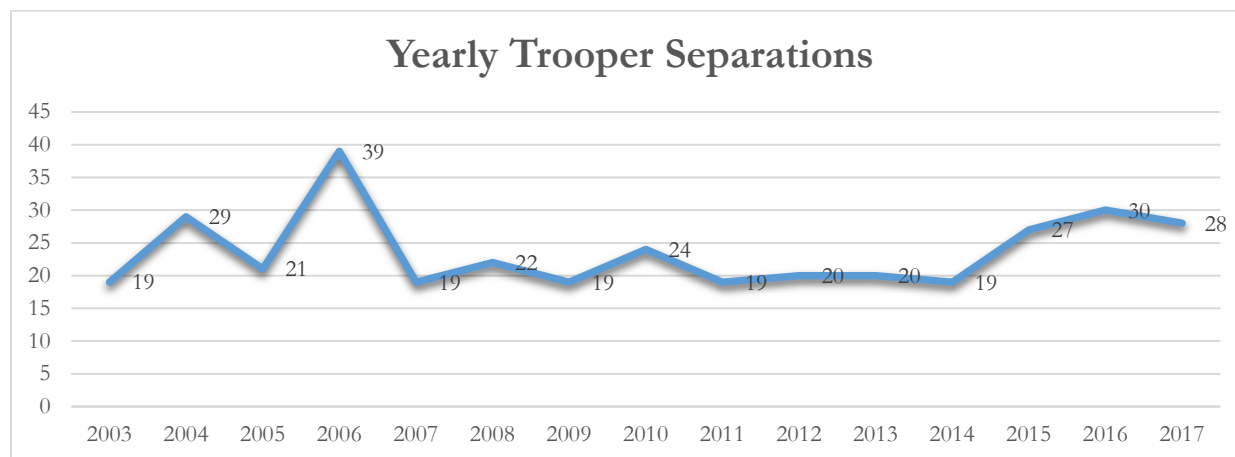
The Honorable Scott Kawasaki
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kawasaki,

This letter is in response to questions asked by members of the House Public Safety Finance Subcommittee during the February 1, 2018, meeting on AST/AWT/VPSO recruitment and retention.

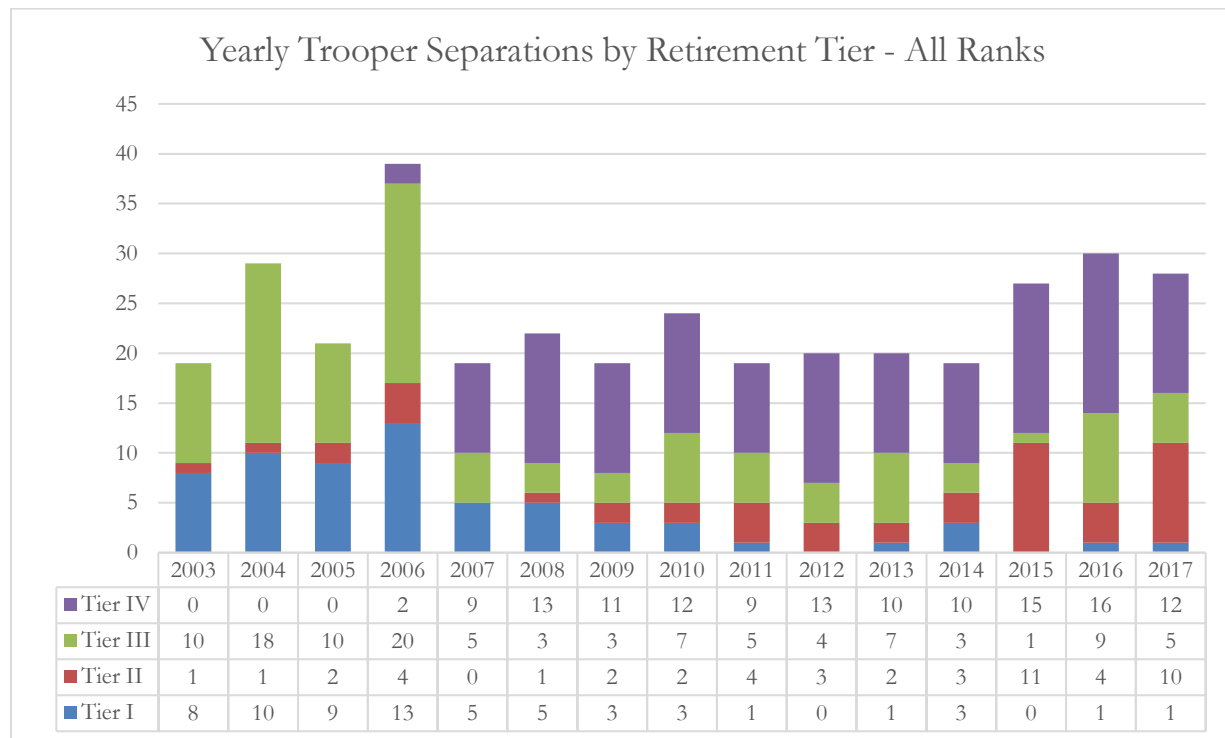
Representative Saddler asked for a long-term (20 year) trend for non-retirement separations to put the chart on page 4 of the AST/AWT presentation into better context.

The data used in the graph on page 4 of the presentation were based on either personal knowledge of who retired when they separated and/or from exit survey outreach done in the recruitment unit. Reliable long-range data on non-retirement separations is not available because the state's system does not track separations by retirement versus non-retirement. The graph below goes back 15 years and shows a summary of the separations by retirement tier graph on the following page.



Representative Rauscher asked how many troopers left the force each year for the past ten years, what tier benefit level they each left with and whether they retired or quit to better understand if benefits could be determined to be a factor.

The following graph was provided in a response from the department to this committee dated February 7, 2018. It shows the number of troopers who separated from state service by retirement tier since 2003. After consulting with the Department of Administration, DPS learned there isn't a way for the Division of Retirement & Benefits to determine who retired in the Tier IV system given the nature of the type of plan it is. Given the PERS Defined Benefit Plan has only been in effect for 12 years it is not likely that any of the Tier IV separations were due to retirement. However, DPS was not able to confirm that information.



Representative Saddler wanted to know the number of troopers per square mile and the number of people served per trooper.

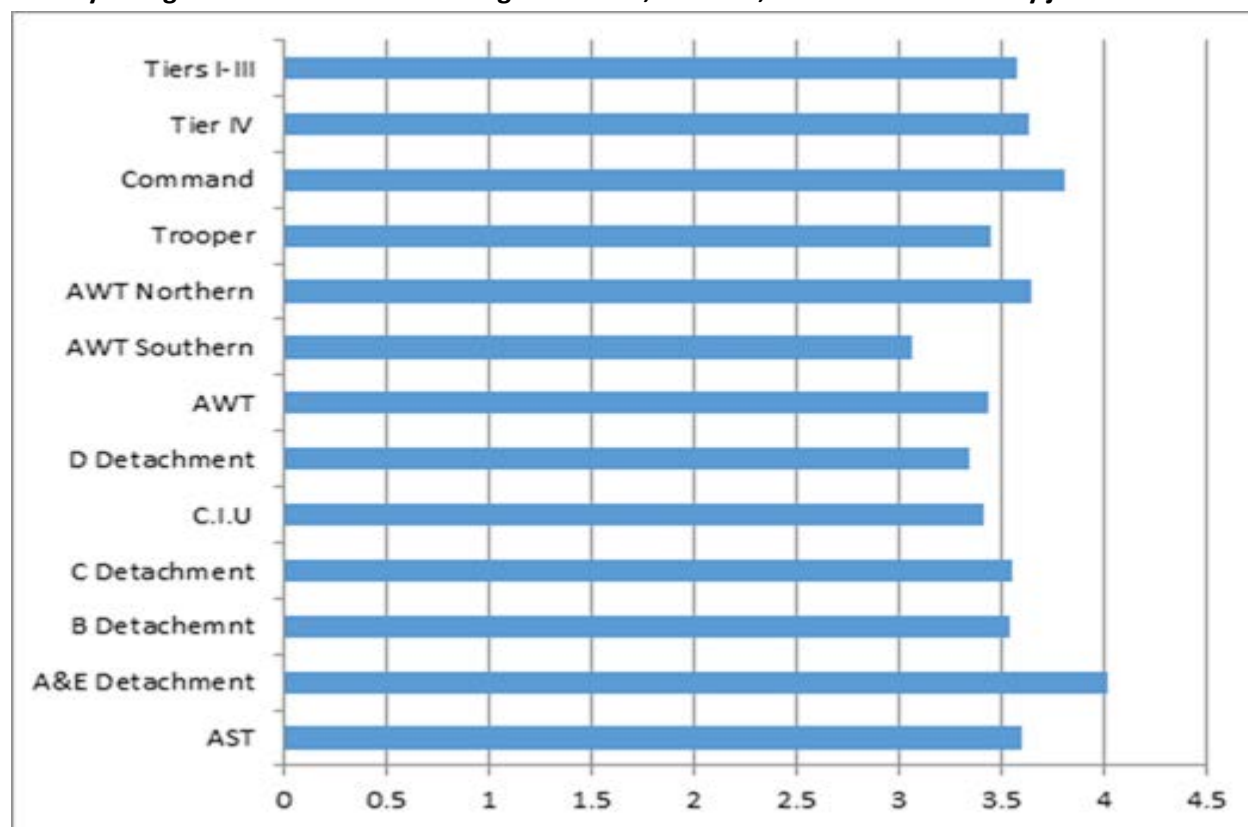
The State of Alaska encompasses 586,412 square miles of land. Based on the total number of authorized trooper positions, this equates to one trooper for every 1,511 square miles. However, it is important to note that the State of Alaska has more than 31,383 miles of shoreline. The Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers is responsible for protecting from the shore out to three miles. The State is also responsible for the preservation of the migratory fish resource, such as salmon, up to 200 miles off shore of Alaska. The Bering Sea alone encompasses 886,000 square miles of fishing grounds.

Regarding the number of people served per trooper, DPS answered a similar question from this committee last session. For the Alaska State Troopers, the ratio is one trooper for every 1,321 residents in the Kenai Peninsula Borough; one trooper for every 1,622 residents in the Fairbanks North Star Borough; and one trooper for every 1,944 residents in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough – an average of less than one trooper per 1,000 residents. *See Attachment 1.*

Representative Parish asked if it is possible to break out the commissioned employee satisfaction data based on retirement tier.

DPS was not able to break out the commissioned employee responses by retirement tier for all the survey questions, but could for the response regarding overall job satisfaction levels as shown in the graph below.

“Rate your agreement with the following statement, “Overall, I am satisfied with my job.”



Representative Saddler asked how many VPSOs are availing themselves of the option to carry a firearm.

Currently, there aren't any VPSOs that carry a firearm in the course of their duties. The decision to arm VPSOs is at the discretion of their employer and may also be made in consultation with the village or community the VPSO will be serving. Regardless, all VPSOs receive appropriate firearms instruction at the Public Safety Training Academy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these responses. Please let me know if I can provide further information

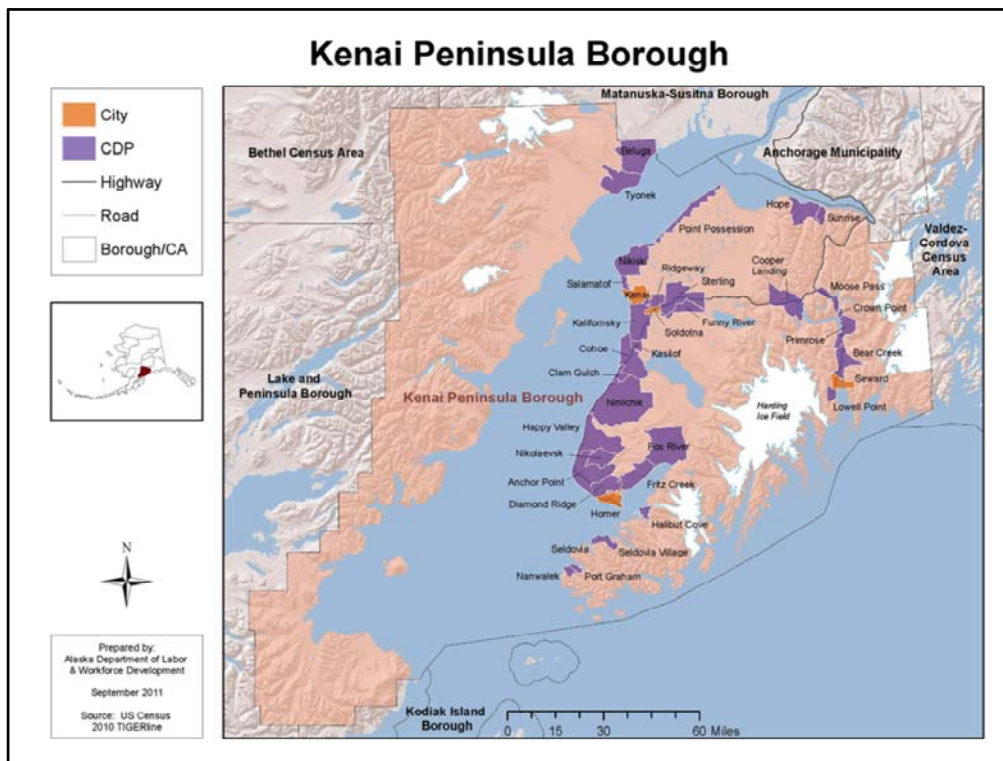
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Walt Monegan', with a stylized 'W' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Walt Monegan
Commissioner

Attachments (1)

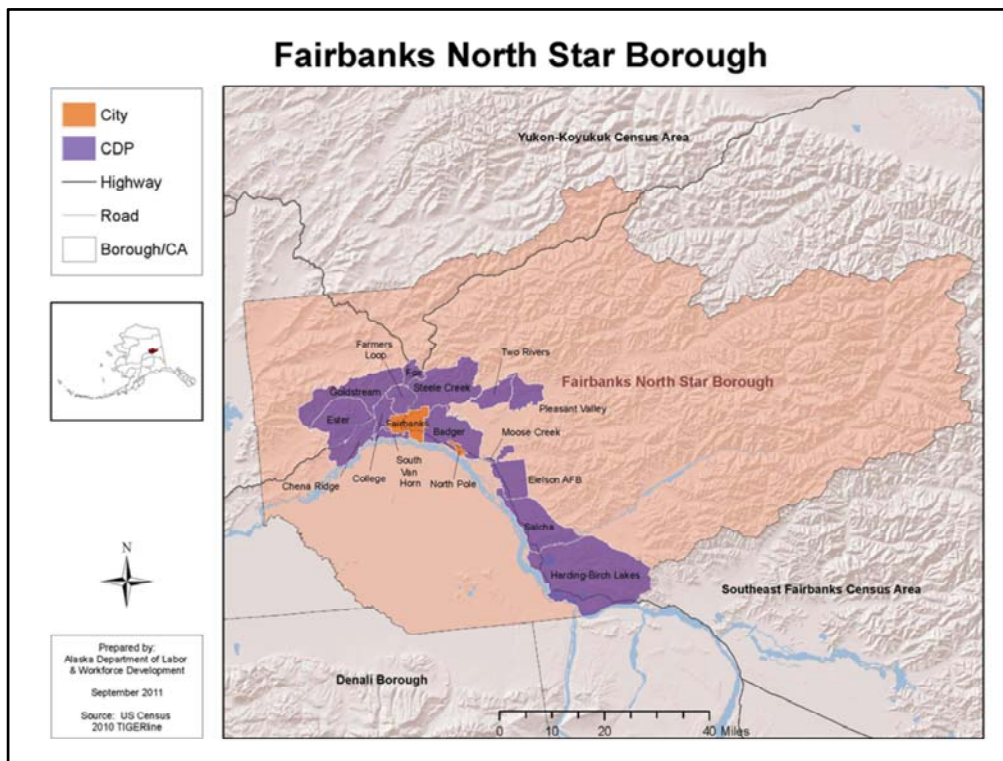
cc: Colonel Hans Brinke, Director, Alaska State Troopers, DPS
Colonel Steve Bear, Director, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, DPS
Kelly Howell, Administrative Services Director, DPS
Allison Hanzawa, Special Assistant to the Commissioner II, DPS
Torrey Jacobson, Program Budget Analyst IV, Governor's Office of Management and Budget
Amanda Ryder, Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Finance Division



Current population of Kenai Peninsula Borough, minus Homer, Kenai, Seward, and Soldotna
 = **38,322**

Total number of AST patrol troopers w/in borough (Sergeant and below) = **29**

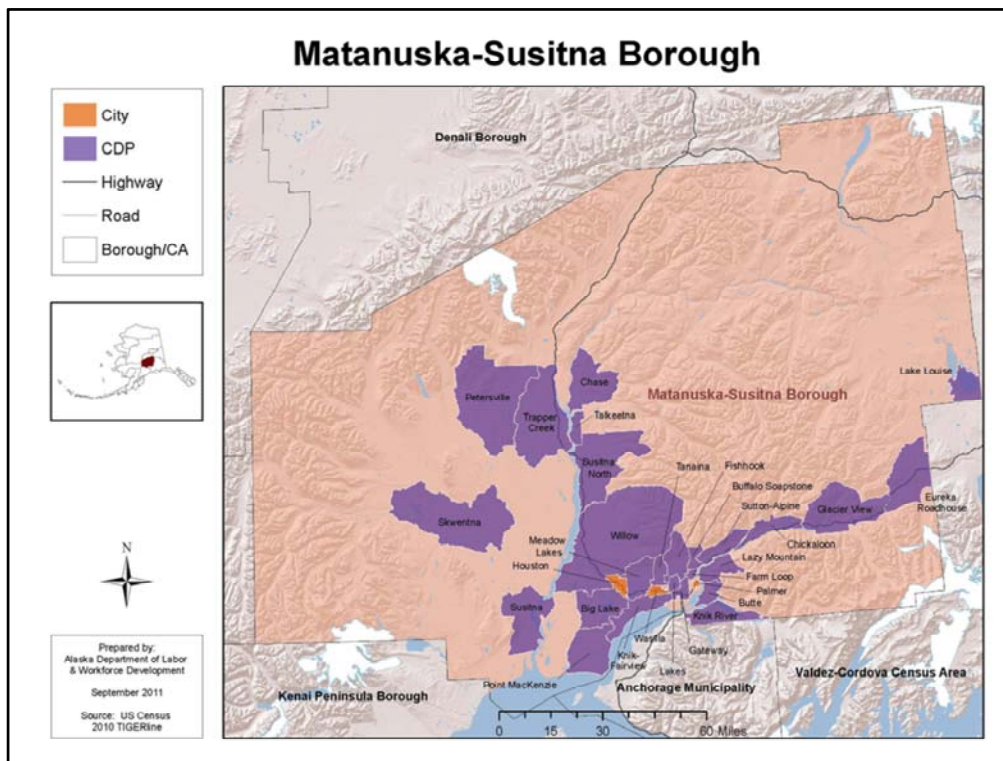
Ratio of 1 trooper for every 1,321 residents (all age groups)



Current population of Fairbanks North Star Borough, minus Fairbanks, North Pole, and Eielson AFB = **61,524**

Total number of AST patrol troopers w/in borough (Sergeant and below, not including non-perms) = **37**

Ratio of 1 trooper for every 1,662 residents (all age groups)



Current population of Mat-Su Borough, minus Wasilla and Palmer = **85,575**

Total number of AST patrol troopers w/in borough (Sergeant and below) = **44**

Ratio of 1 trooper for every 1,944 residents (all age groups)