

Challenges and Solutions

Operating a program created 40 years ago; it is time for adaptation and change

- **Solution:** Update and evaluate statutes and regulations to reduce burden on communities, increase support of officers
- Authorizing statute: AS § 18.65.670 Village public safety officers program
- Alaska Administrative Code: 13 AAC 96

Recruitment/Retention: toughest job in Alaska; unlike AST no back up, no “off-duty”

- **Solution:** Fund recruitment activities and best practices
 - Increase pay or provide COLA
 - Allow sign-on bonus at the discretion of each Grantee– similar to Fairbanks PD and Anchorage PD with retention incentives
 - Increase morale with easy fixes - allow funding for better uniforms and hats
 - 13 AAC 96.040 limits communities to one VPSO – amend to allow “hub” communities, to allow rotating shifts within high needs communities or job sharing opportunities.

Unfunded mandates

- **Solution:** Update regulations that place unfunded mandates on rural communities
- Allow funding to be used on housing, office space, jail cells, and communication needs
 - 13 AAC 96.040 amend by deleting section (A)
- Change the way the program is funded by legislature (positions to full operational costs)
- Provide training
 - 13 AAC 96.010(b)(6) amend to allow mandatory funding of training and equipment

Inflexibility in management of program/ micromanaged by AST

- **Solution:** Compacting- allow Grantee to compact and provide public safety services that meet the needs of the rural communities; local control was an original selling point of the VPSO program.
- **Solution:** Examine possibly moving the VPSO program out from under the Alaska State Troopers; Current statute allows for a Regional Public Safety Officer (AS § 18.65.680) that could provide the oversight with a direct connection and equal footing as AST.
- Enable local decision making; Grantees with proven track record should have operational decision making authority.
- No statutory fix needed.

Arming has been a slow process due to liability concerns; law has yet to be implemented

- VPSO's are not “public safety officers” and therefore not covered under the doctrine of qualified immunity.
- **Solution:** Alaska Attorney General opinion on whether or not the State of Alaska believes that VPSO's are covered as “public safety officers” within state law; and assist Grantees in lobbying for a change in federal law to include VPSO's as “public safety officers” – this would also allow VPSO's to qualify for death benefits.



Tanana Chiefs Conference Public Safety Infrastructure Table 3/1/18

TCC VILLAGES	OFFICE	JAIL CELL	HOUSE	FIREHALL	VEHICLE	ATV	SNOWMACHINE	BOAT
ALLAKAKET								
MINTO								
NENANA		SOA						
TANANA								
FT YUKON								
ARCTIC VILLAGE								
CIRCLE								
VENETIE								
HUSLIA								
NULATO								
RUBY								
HOLY CROSS								
GRAYLING								
MCGRATH								
EAGLE								
NORTHWAY								
TANACROSS								
TETLIN				CODE RED				
VPSO ROVER - FAI								
VPSO ROVER - FAI								
VPSO ROVER - FAI								
VPSO ROVER - FAI								

 None

 TCC

 City

 Tribe