



# Department of Public Safety Overview

## Senate State Affairs Committee

Presentation by  
Commissioner James Cockrell  
February 7, 2023



# Department Objectives



Commissioner  
James Cockrell



Deputy  
Commissioner  
Bryan Barlow

## Key Objectives

- Recruit and Retain
- Rural Alaska Law Enforcement and Safety
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Village Public Safety Officer Program
- Fisheries and Wildlife Resource Protection
- Narcotics and Major Crime Investigations



# Department Success in 2022

- Added two missing and/or murdered indigenous people investigators
- Seized 13,425,000 potentially fatal doses of illicit fentanyl
- Currently have 68 Village Public Safety Officers
- 15.2% decrease in Alaska's overall crime rate
  - This reflects the lowest number of reported offenses since 1975 and continues the downward trend in Alaska crime that started in 2018
- Continuing to hire State Troopers; 51 new Troopers started training in 2022
- Expansion of the wellness program
- Body worn camera pilot project scheduled for Spring 2023
  - draft policy posted for public feedback





# Department Organizational Chart

## Commissioner James Cockrell

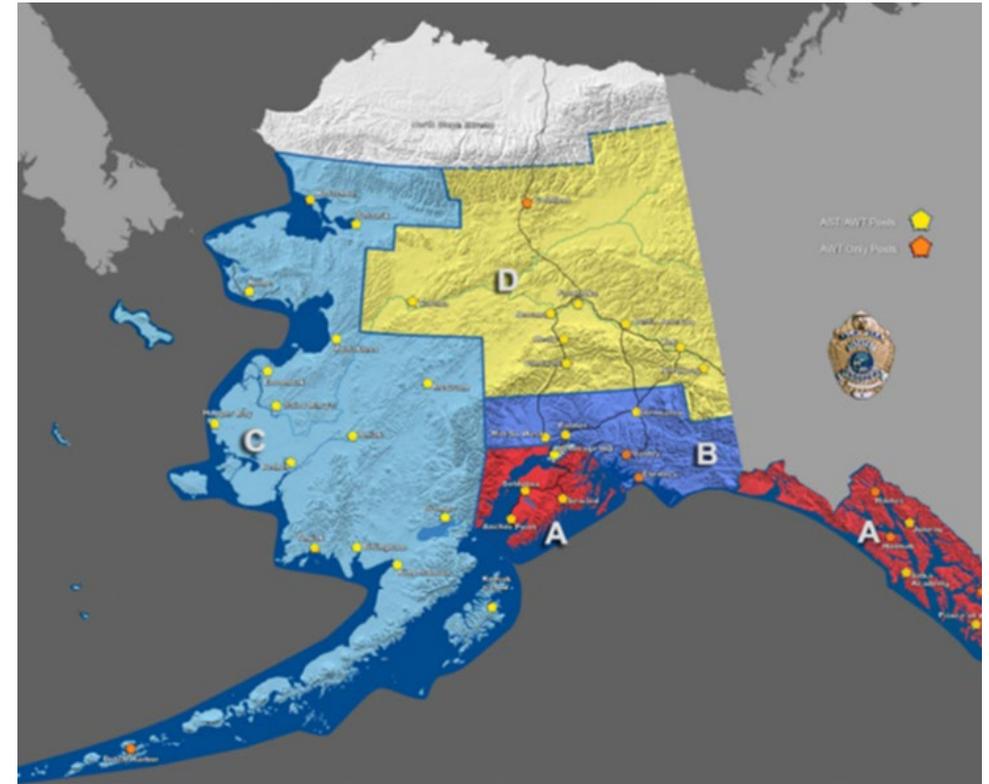




# Division of Alaska State Troopers

- Alaska Bureau of Investigation
  - Major Crimes Investigations
  - Technical/Financial Crime Investigations
- Statewide Drug and Alcohol Enforcement
- Four Detachments
- Statewide Support
  - Search and Rescue Coordination
  - Advanced Training Unit
  - Recruitment Unit
  - Prisoner Transport
- Dispatch

Alaska State Trooper Detachments





# Division of Alaska State Troopers

## Accomplishments

Seized 215% more methamphetamine, 440% more fentanyl, and 334% more heroin from 2021

Solved 85% of homicides within Trooper jurisdiction

Expansion of the two-on/two-off posts in rural Alaska

Online reporting program

## Challenges

Recruitment and Retention

Technological changes in how crimes are committed

Importation of drugs and alcohol into rural Alaska

Rural housing





# Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers



Alaska Wildlife Troopers



Alaska Wildlife Troopers Marine Enforcement

## Accomplishments

- Collaboration with State and federal agencies, search and rescue groups, and public resource users
- Boating safety education and enforcement to reduce boating fatalities
- Identification of commercial resource crime and successful prosecution

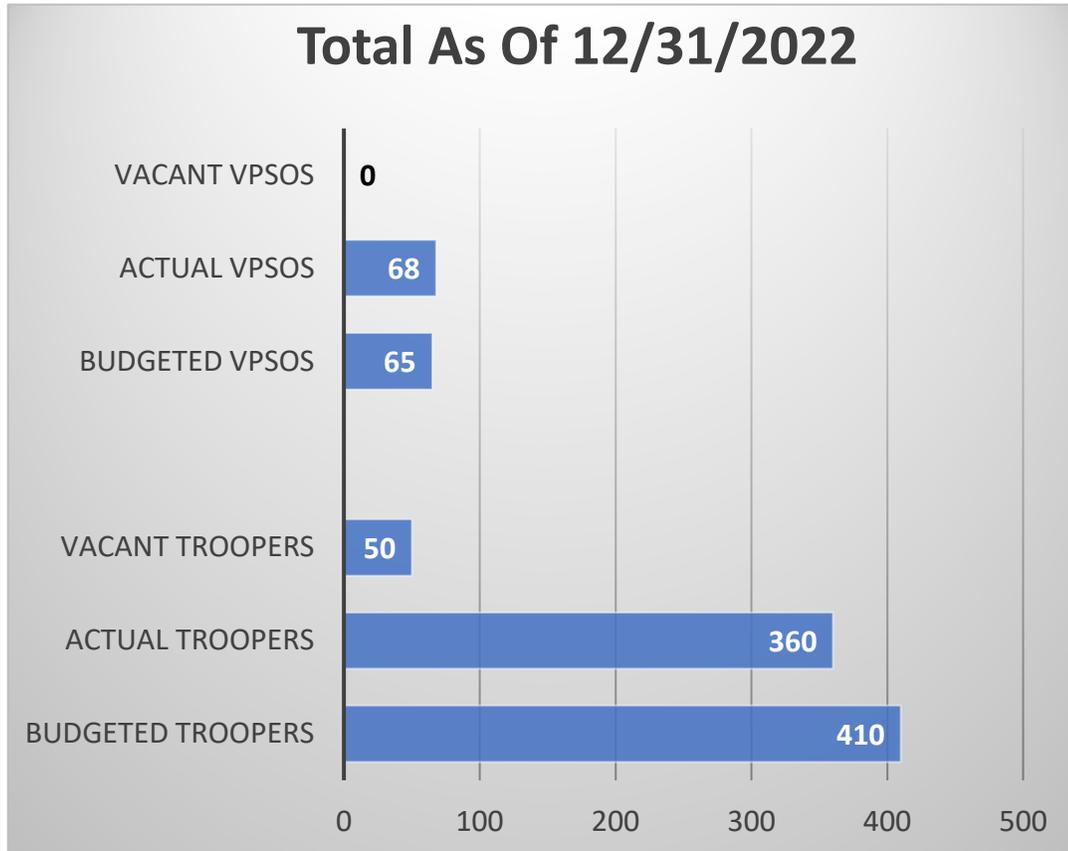
## Challenges

- 6,640 miles of coastline, significant hunts and fisheries
- Complicated regulatory structure and limited resources; 891,000 licenses sold and 90 Troopers





# Department Vacancies: Troopers and Village Public Safety Officers



- **Budgeted:** Total number of permanent, full-time positions budgeted in the current fiscal year.
- **Actual:** Total number of filled positions at the time of this report
- **Vacant:** Total number of vacant positions at the time of this report
- **Positions**
  - Troopers include the rank of Recruit through Major and include State Troopers and Alaska Wildlife Troopers
  - Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs)



# Aircraft and Marine Sections

## Aircraft Section

- Law enforcement response/investigation
- Search and rescue
- Wildlife resource protection
- Prisoner transport
- Major fleet refreshment underway
  - 44 fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft
  - 19 aircraft bed-down bases
  - 5,667 hours flown in 2022 (calendar year)



## Marine Section

- Marine fisheries enforcement
- Search and rescue
- Fleet management
  - Two 35' vessels and two patrol skiffs being built to replace older vessels
  - P/V Stimson, Kodiak (156' deployable statewide)
  - P/V Enforcer, Juneau (84' being decommissioned)
  - P/V Cama'i, Kodiak (69' catamaran)
  - 12 medium-sized vessels (27' to 35') in 12 different communities
  - Multiple other small skiffs and river boats





# Village Public Safety Officer Program

## Program Status

- \$15,207.7 awarded
- 10 Grantees
- 68 VPSOs currently employed
- 2022 Statute Reform: Added program clarity and improved wages and support (multi-officer assignment, traveling officers, training reform, Tribal relationships w/ DPS liaison)

## Challenges

- Recruitment and retention
- Insufficient rural public safety infrastructure, lack of housing





# Division of Fire and Life Safety

Rural Fire Protection

Fire Training Programs

Safety Inspections

Building Plan Review

Public Education

Alaska Fire Standards Council

**Mission:** to prevent the loss of life and property from fire and explosion. Fire safety is improved through three means:

- Enforcement
- Engineering
- Education



## Accomplishments

- 664 building fire and life safety inspections
- 776 fire and building plan reviews completed
- 45 significant fire investigated
- New web-based application to process permits deployed on Nov 17, 2022; 170 applications processed in 2-4 weeks

## Challenges

- Rural fire department capacity
- Communication methods to reach high-risk groups and areas regarding personal responsibility to decrease loss



# Division of Statewide Services



## Alaska Public Safety Communication Services

- Supported 12,409,758 calls and 20,436,826 push to talks
- Completed update of site repeaters in all State-owned sites; 72 site repeater locations

## Information Systems

- Linked over 30 years of historical case files to the current Records Management System
- Deployed a new Online Police Reporting program

## Criminal Justice Information Systems Program

- Secured multiple federal grants to support Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) modernization efforts
- National Incident Based Reporting System repository purchased with federal grant funds, 30 law enforcement agencies participating

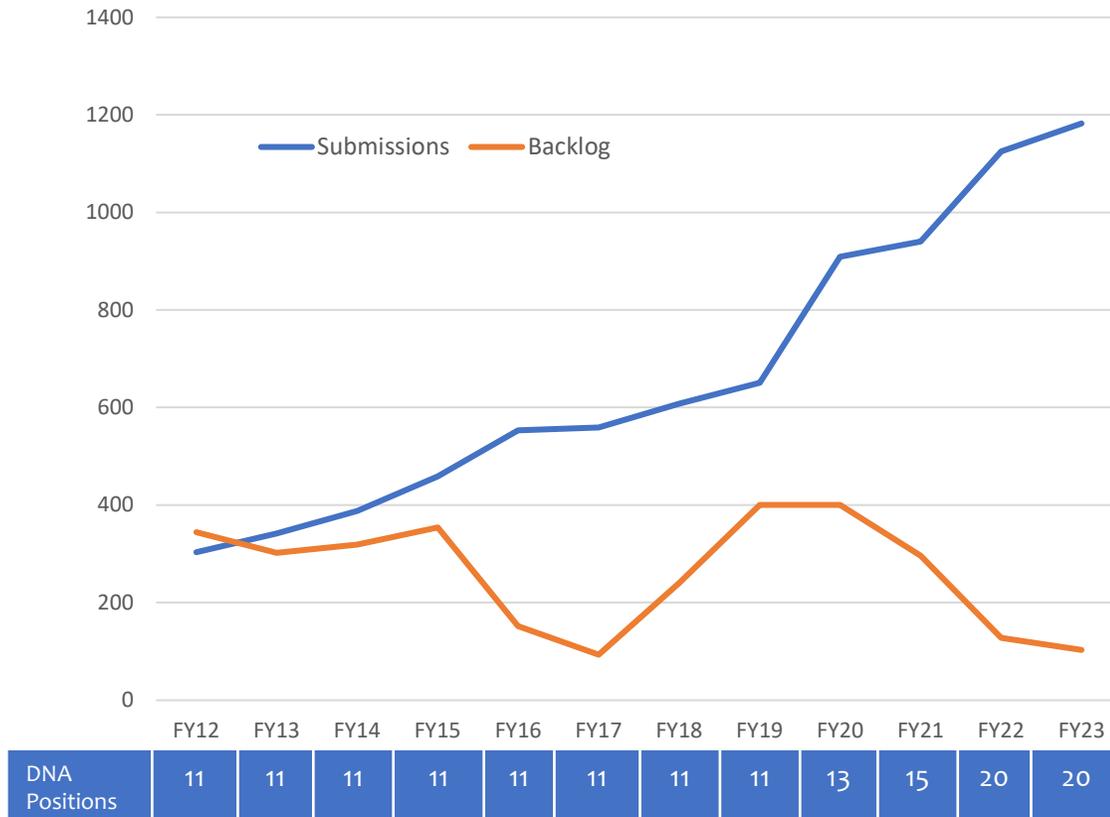
## Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Lab

- 9,146 DNA database samples from arrestees and convicted offenders
- 2,491 sexual assault kit testing completed; backlog reduced by 57% per AS 44.41.065



# Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Lab

Yearly DNA Submissions and Backlog



- Five DNA Scientist/Forensic Technician positions added in FY23 Governor’s budget
- Lab processing times (in DAYS):

	FY22	FY23 YTD
DNA Sex Assault Casework	70	55
All DNA Casework	120	65
Forensic Alcohol Casework	19	25
Seized Drugs Casework	23	49

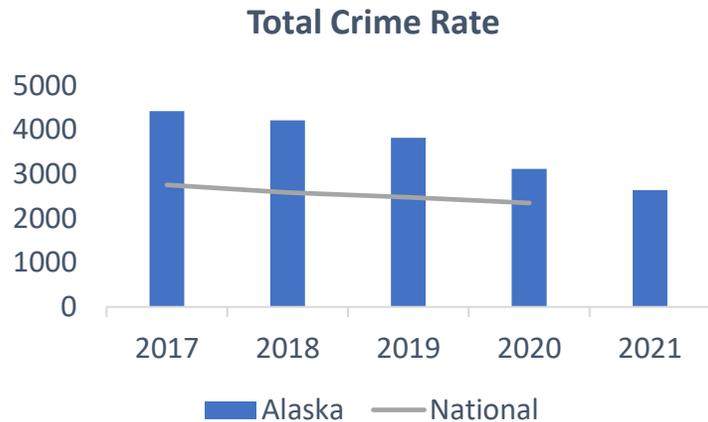
Note: submission data for FY23 is a projection based on current submissions through 12.31.2022



# Uniform Crime Reporting

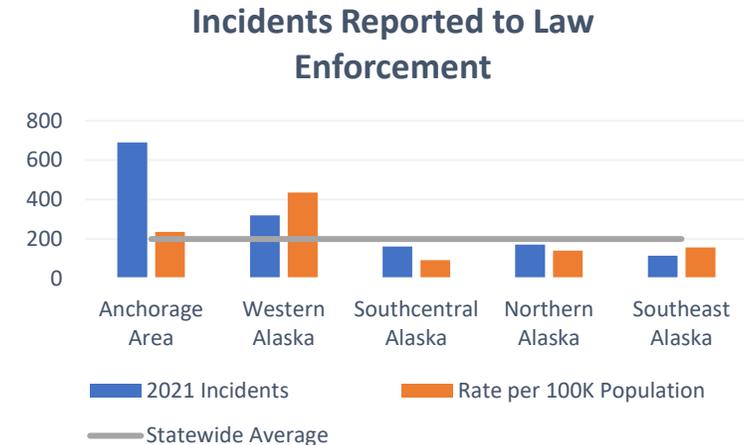
## 2021 Crime in Alaska Publication

- Overall reported crime rate, based on 100,000 population, decreased 15.2%
- Overall reported violent crime rate decreased 9.7%
- Overall property crime rate decreased 17.2%



## 2021 Felony Sex Offense Publication

- Victims over 18 year of age reported being assaulted by a stranger in 17% of incidents
- Nearly 58% of victims are juveniles
- 76% of locations were reported as residence/home





# Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

**Mission:** Promotes the prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault and provides safety for Alaskans victimized or impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault through a statewide system of crisis intervention and support, and by supporting perpetrator accountability and rehabilitation.

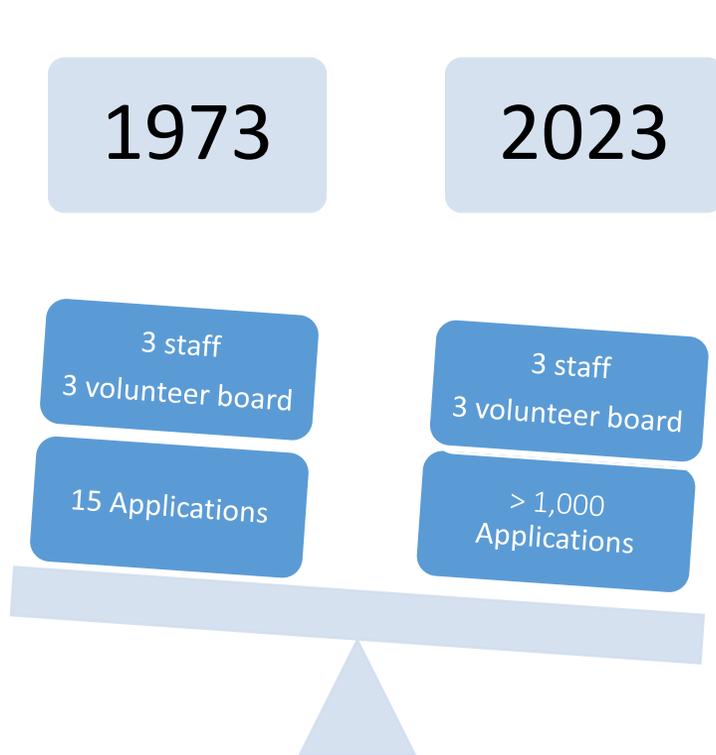
- Eleven-member Board of Directors
- Eleven full-time staff
- Fund 34 community-based agencies serving Utqiagvik to Unalaska
- Manage and monitor a total of 90 grant awards
- Created 4-year Violence Against Women Act/Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors State Implementation Plan to prioritize training and service needs to better prevent and respond to interpersonal violence
- Began implementing a Language Access Plan





# Violent Crimes Compensation Board

Mission: The Violent Crimes Compensation Board exists to alleviate some of the financial burden victims face following a violent crime



## Crime and Expense Type

Homicide	Funeral & Burial
Assault	Lost Wages
Arson	Medical & Mental Health
Child Abuse	Relocation
Sexual Assault	Safety & Security
DUI/DWI	Crime Scene Clean Up
Robbery	Travel



# Alaska Police Standards Council

## Mission:

To produce and maintain a highly trained and positively motivated professional, capable of meeting contemporary law enforcement standards of performance.

## Values:

- A** - Accountability
- P** - Professionalism
- S** - Service
- C** - Character





# Thank You



## Commissioner, Department of Public Safety

James Cockrell

- 907-269-5086
- [James.Cockrell@Alaska.gov](mailto:James.Cockrell@Alaska.gov)

## Administrative Services Director, Department of Public Safety

Pam Halloran

- 907-465-5501
- [Pam.Halloran@Alaska.gov](mailto:Pam.Halloran@Alaska.gov)