

AK LEGISLATURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE FILES SCOMM 157 3361

- (1) a requirement that the corporation comply with this chapter and with state and federal law;
- (2) a salary-and-benefit schedule for village public safety officers, with a provision that the corporation may provide salaries and benefits no greater than those established under that schedule;
- (3) a provision that names the corporation as the employer, for all purposes, of a village public safety officer;
- (4) a provision by which the corporation agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the State of Alaska, and officers, employees, and agents of the State of Alaska, for an act or omission in the administration of the village public safety officer program or in the monitoring, assisting, or training of a village public safety officer;
- (5) a requirement that the corporation maintain insurance as follows, without reimbursement from the department for a deductible amount that the corporation might owe:
 - (A) worker's compensation insurance as required under AS 23.30;
 - (B) comprehensive general liability insurance, including police professional practices, with
 - (i) limits of no less than \$1,000,000; and
 - (ii) the State of Alaska, and officers, employees, and agents of the State of Alaska, named as additional named insureds;
- (6) a requirement that the corporation comply with AS 18.80.220 .

History: Eff. 8/18/95, Register 135

Authority: AS 18.65.670

13 AAC 96.040. Administration by corporations and villages

(a) A nonprofit regional corporation that receives a grant under this chapter shall provide

(1) a village public safety officer to a village only if the village provides the officer

(A) office space;

(B) a telephone with long distance service; and

(C) a place to temporarily hold individuals under arrest; and

(2) no more than one village public safety officer to a village, unless an

(A) additional position is provided for a period of 30 days or less for training, orientation, or a special circumstance as authorized by the department; or

(B) application as set out in 13 AAC 96.020 for a full-time second position has been submitted to and approved by the department.

(b) A nonprofit regional corporation that receives a grant under this chapter, or a village participating in the village public safety officer program,

(1) shall keep financial, personnel, and other records relating to village public safety officers and, upon request, shall provide that information to the department;

(2) shall provide, for the department's review, annual financial audits that satisfy the requirements of 2 AAC 45.010, regardless of whether the amount of the grant is below the minimum for which 2 AAC 45.010 requires an audit;

(3) shall help the department conduct periodic and unannounced site visits to monitor

(A) the performance of a village public safety officer; and

(B) compliance with this chapter or with an agreement made under this chapter;

(4) shall promptly notify the department if the corporation or village fails to comply with

(A) this chapter or with state or federal law; or

(B) an agreement relating to the village public safety officer program between the

(i) department and the corporation; or

(ii) corporation and a village;

(5) shall promptly notify the department if a village public safety officer resigns or vacates a position;

(6) shall promptly notify the department and submit a written report about an incident in which a village public safety officer carries a handgun or fires any firearm while on duty;

(7) may not, directly or indirectly, allocate grant money to

(A) the purchase or lease of firearms equipment; or

(B) lobbying activity before a federal, state, or local government body; and

(8) may not, except in an emergency, permit a village public safety officer to

(A) carry a handgun in the performance of the officer's duties; or

(B) supervise or direct an individual who carries a handgun.

History: Eff. 8/18/95, Register 135

Authority: AS 18.65.670

City of Mountain Village

P.O. Box 32085
Mountain Village, Alaska 99632
(907) 591-2715 or 2929
Fax (907) 591-2920

Friday, October 05, 2007

Senator Donny Olson
State Capital Rom 514
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Honorable Senator Olson:

As City Manager of Mountain Village I am writing on behalf of City of Mountain Village regarding the specific problems that involve law enforcement for the community of Mountain Village.

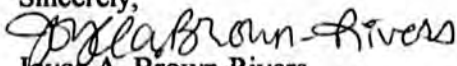
First of all the Village Public Safety Officer and Village Police Officers are the first responders to all crisis calls ranging from domestic violence, rape cases, theft, many break-ins, assaults, driving under the influence, search & rescue, fire, and many death cases, most cases inspired by alcohol and drugs. With the size of our community it will never stop, it has been going on even before Mountain Village first got incorporated. Depending on the urgency of a call, in which most cases the strength level of call varies and where the limit of contacting the State Trooper takes over is always on a depended level, meaning troopers don't handle misdemeanor cases just the felony cases.

Secondly, it is very important to preserve and adequately fund the law enforcement to keep the crime rate down and ensure the welfare of our large community. Most crime cases are inspired by alcohol or illegal drugs which affect the most vulnerable-the welfare of babies, minors and elders. Without adequate funding it would be impossible to protect, serve, and control hostile environments. Remember, in all cases, Village Public Safety Officers and Village Police Officers are the first responders, which is why it is very important to preserve the funding at an adequate level.

Thirdly, all available resources to curtail the crime rate down in rural Alaska are critical such as drug/alcohol sniffing dogs that other communities are lucky to have, continued screening of airfreight, mail, suspects, and providing rewards for reporting importation would help tremendously. One life saved is worth everything to families. Lobbying the legislature on the state and federal level is critical also.

In conclusion I hope this information is most helpful in your task force meetings. Good luck in your decision-making and I hope the best decision turns out in what works best for the State of Alaska and our communities. Thank you very much for taking our testimony and attempting to see how we live and personally see what happens in our communities. It means very much to us. God Bless.

Sincerely,


Joyce A. Brown-Rivers
City Manager

Testimony By Merlin Koonooka, Gambell Elder

The effectiveness of the local option law is now in question. And has been from the beginning. The purpose of this law was to keep the dry community dry. Not only by prohibiting importation of alcohol. We know the real purpose is to legally ban the use of alcohol in the village. So that young people, children, families are safe, to educate especially the young people about the law and to assure the elders that the law is there to protect all our families. The VPSO program was created so that we can effectively police ourselves by hiring and training our own people. After all these years since its inception we know by now the VPSO program is not working in most of our villages. The police protection simply is just not there when we need it and call for it. There is a feeling of discouragement and desperation to know there are no VPO's, VPSO's or troopers when you need them.

For a couple of years or so, we had a VPSO from outside in our village. He was provided housing for free by our village corporation. He provided professional leadership for our VPO's. He provided respect for the law by demonstrating a uniform²³ presence in our midst. Since he left, no replacement no replacement has been found. We were promised the possibility of a State Trooper to be stationed on the island. This has not happened. We have been told that there are not enough troopers in the state to go around. It takes time now for troopers to respond, if at all. It seems they now have a policy of mainly reaction to situations. Perhaps it would be advantages^{un} to all if they practiced a more proactive policy. Local manufacturer and sale of alcohol is becoming rampant. The results are suicides, loss of life and property, underage drinking, school attendance and performance etc., etc. We see more ~~a more~~ importation citations and drug busts now happening but to see alcoholism on a rampant rise is a challenge we need to address once and for all.

the challenge that the community is facing
We are a new state with the best laws our country can offer. We are an oil rich state with resources that we can use for the benefit of our people.

Sawoonga ③

Tanette

9-26-07

1. Higher salary for VPSO as well as VPO
2. Education to local residents of basic law
3. VPSO under State umbrella with administration with local agencies i.e. like a branch.
4. 2 people working together as a support team for villages that are over 500 residents
5. Funding for Public Safety Building to include heating and electrical costs included
6. Having 3 tiers as an Alaska Police Standard is an excellent policy VPSO's
7. in-service for outside or orientation of cultural values to be done on a local level

VPSO TASK FORCE HEARING TESTIMONY
SEPTEMBER 26, 2007
GAMBELL, ALASKA

MY NAME IS BRANSON TUNGIYAN, GENERAL MANAGER FOR THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF GAMBELL. TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO TESTIFY ON THE NEED OF PROPER LAW ENFORCEMENT IN GAMBELL. ALTHOUGH THE CITY OF GAMBELL ADMINISTERS THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT, THERE IS A LACK OF LEADERSHIP BECAUSE THERE IS NO POLICE CHIEF, NOR IS THERE A VILLAGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER. THE LEADERSHIP, A VPSO, SHOULD HAVE PLANS LAID OUT, SCHEDULES TO FOLLOW, INSTRUCT THE VPOs ON DAILY SCHEDULES.

GAMBELL DOES NOT HAVE A VPSO. IT MADE A "BIG DIFFERENCE" WHEN THE VILLAGE HAD ONE. THE VPSO MADE A DIFFERENCE IN CONTACTING THE ALASKA STATE TROOPERS. A VPSO MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE POSITIVE IMPACT WHEN THE CITY GOVERNMENTS MAKE PUBLIC SAFETY REQUESTS TO THE STATE OF ALASKA. IN A VILLAGE WHEN THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPRISE JUST THE VILLAGE POLICE OFFICERS, THERE IS NO DIRECT LEADERSHIP WHEN AN EMERGENCY OCCURS THAT INVOLVES THE SAFETY OF A LIFE, OR LIVES.

WITH THE LACK OF THIS MUCH-NEEDED LEADERSHIP, CRIMES ARE COMMITTED, VIOLENCE OCCURRING DUE TO THE INFLUENCE OF HOME BREW, VANDALISM.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE STATE'S LOCAL OPTION LAW? THIS LAW WOULD HAVE PROVIDED US WITH PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE "CURE" TO ALCOHOL

RELATED PROBLEMS. THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OR THE OFFICE OF JUSTICE, OR THE STATE OF ALASKA FOR THAT MATTER, SHOULD FOCUS THE EFFORTS IN CREATING AN EFFECTIVE VPSO PROGRAM THAT CAN HAVE A GREATER IMPACT TOWARDS THESE PROBLEMS. IN ORDER FOR THE LOCAL OPTION LAW TO BE EFFECTIVE, WE NEED TO HAVE BETTER LAW ENFORCEMENT, WITH A VPSO POSITION IN PLACE. THE STATE OF ALASKA NEEDS TO STEP UP THE EFFORTS IN PROVIDING FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY. WHY CAN'T THE STATE OF ALASKA PROVIDE A VPSO FOR EVERY VILLAGE IN ALASKA? WHY ISN'T THERE ANY PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDINGS WITH UP TO DATE EQUIPMENT? WHY DOES COMMUNITY MEMBERS CRY FOR HELP WHEN WE HAVE THE STATE GOVERNMENT THAT IS SUPPOSED TO PROVIDE IT THROUGH THE CITY GOVERNMENTS?

THESE ARE "CRUNCH TIMES". WHEN WE HAVE PROVIDED YOU WITH THE BEST OF CONCERNS, ISSUES, AND COMPLAINTS, I FEEL THAT NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW IF YOU HAVE ANY GUTS TO FULLY SUPPORT THE VPSO PROGRAM AND TO FUND THE PROGRAM WHOLEHEARTEDLY. WE NEED THAT LEADERSHIP IN GAMBELL BECAUSE WE HAVE SEEN WITH OUR OWN EYES THE NEED FOR THE VPSO WHEN A SUICIDE HAPPENS, WHEN A LIFE IS LOST, WHEN BOATS/HUNTERS ARE LATE TO RETURN, OR WHEN PUBLIC DRUNKENESS BECOMES RAMPANT. THAT IS WHY I SAY THAT THESE ARE CRUNCH TIMES. WE NEED THAT LEADERSHIP NOW!

THANK YOU.

9/26/01 Gambell

My name is Leonard Apangalook, Sr. I am a lifelong resident of Gambell.

I welcome you to our isolated village and the outer extremity of our state. I am glad you are here to see for yourselves what our village is like; we are treeless, there is not a single road in the village, and we have no law and order. Admittedly there are some government programs that come through with excellent services but judicial services is not one of those. Having said that, I can venture to say that our villagers don't enjoy the same rights as you do in the metropolis of our state. Despite our efforts locally to remedy our social ills we have not succeeded; thus we have over the past few years sought the help of the next higher authority and that is the state of Alaska, but this too has failed. It is hard to believe big brother is not coming through in time need and it makes you wonder if the judicial system is capable of dispensing proper authority.

As an elder in our community I care a lot about my village, especially our young people. Right in front of our eyes we are watching a lot of our young people getting infected with the disease of alcoholism. Supposedly we are a dry town under state law but it is not working. The state of Alaska passed a local option law with nothing to back it up with.

I would like to relate with you a personal experience last spring when our under age child was given alcohol by an adult. My wife and I was able to get a statement from our child who provided the alcohol. Armed with evidence, we called the state trooper at Nome with the intent of filing a complaint and we were told by the trooper that he would be here in two days. The trooper came three months later on a different case and we confronted him for not showing up as promised. We mentioned that two years ago the village was told we would get a state trooper stationed on the island. His response was: "I guarantee you Gambell will never get a state trooper stationed out here." This was very disheartening.

Here again we are demanding equal rights as those people living in urban areas of our state. Is this forum capable of implementing our need for basic human rights? Thank you, that's all I have.

for May
Bethel (5)

VPSO Task force

Oct 4, 2007

Not necessarily in order

Introduction: Name, yrs in program

- 1. Adequate clothing for summer & winter for VPSOs**
- 2. Transportation ATVs, Snow machines**
- 3. Communication system. Very vital for responding to emergencies and SAR.**
- 4. Chaplin...**
- 5. VPSO / Oversight working relationship.**
- 6. State employee....AVCP VPSOs deliberated and come to conclusion that they don't want to be State Employee.**

*Our Region
greatly need more funding for the
Program.*

Max Olick

History

**VPSO Program don't need to be fixed.
Why try to fix something that is not
broken but theres' lot of room for
improvement.**

**7. Need more funding for the VPSO
Program. We have 56 villages and
only 17 positions for our region. We
need more VPSO's.** *For villages that
are Dine Need of trained officers*

*State Employee / → Suburban way of
life, what we enjoy some we will lose*

VPs: Jack / Ben / David
Beaver / Charles

VPs Program

Started in late 1970's early
1980's

* Started in Kusk, Yuk. Region
by group of YUPIK People
Under Yupitaa Pista, John Agauyuk
Glen Godney (forefathers)
They realize 56 villages were
Direct Need of trained officers.

* Under state ?? Benefits, State
Employees * why not include them
~~now or are we saying that??~~
Why try to fix what's not
Broken, (IMPROVE the Program)
VPs were designed for
56 village under Yupitaa Pista
later under AVCP.

OKed by
D. Brown

007 10, 4

* adaguet Clothing
for Repeat Season.

* * Cost of Living Increase

* Chapter

* * * oversize/working Reha,

* * * VPSO Equipment
ATV, Boats, Vehicles
Villages with Ice Rts.

* ~~State Govt.~~ →

{ * YK Delta hard hit by
Suicide, Alcohol, Drugs
* ~~be able to~~
* AUCP Region VPSO's ~~be able to~~ Alcohol
Drugs, Alcohol, Suicide, Alcohol
Partnership w/ LKSD, YKHC
- NEXT Page -

Long as VPSC is working
he can be teaching (happy)
No Expiration on teaching

* VPSC State Employee?
VPSC don't need to be
fix / why try to fix
something that is not
broken... Improvement
Lot of room

How Village Public Officer Program (VPO & VPSO) Began

By John Angaiak

Foundation:

Under the Nixon-Ford Administration era at the Department of Labor, 1969 – 1977, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 (known as CETA) became law. That law created "Prime Sponsors" across the country. Yupiktak Bista Manpower was solely created to be the prime sponsor of CETA programs within AVCP/Calista region shortly after 1973. Yupiktak Bista Manpower was made responsible for planning and providing a wide range of employment and training service tailored to local needs. At one time, it had plus or minus one thousand employees all throughout the fifty-six villages.

Most of its employees were youths of between 16 – 22 years of age, in response to the call by the Nixon-Ford Administration. The administration's major goal was to develop a new working partnership between the Federal Government and the States and localities—a partnership termed New Federalism. The distinctive feature of this approach was to remove the Federal presence as much as possible, and to substitute in its place local decision-making, flexibility, and accountability. The principal method chosen was block grants and revenue sharing, rather than categorical programs. CETA's purpose was to reduce structural and frictional unemployment resulting from labor market inefficiency and imbalance between supply and demand for particular skills; in other words, in a period of high unemployment and lack of skills particularly among youths.

VPO & VPSO:

The Yupiktak Bista Manpower was already underway and well established within the AVCP/Calista region. Early on, the staff, including this author, recognized the fact that it had to establish a permanent program that will outlast all other programs under its management. The region, like the rest of the rural Alaska, was null and void of the police protection. Early on it was heavily involved in research of the law and enforcement in the region by Criminal Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage prior to 1979. This study was the foundation that helped to kick-start the Village Public Officer program in the summer of 1979. It had embarked on a program that would unite a native entity with State Department of Public Safety under the administration of Governor Hammond exclusively for AVCP/Calista region to create VPO program.

At first, John Angaiak, then the director of YBM had frequent informal meetings with local state troopers personnel here in Bethel, dreaming as to how we should start VPO program. It had to be kept under the lid for a while before plans were firm.

As it firmed up, it took on a life of its own. There was a strong unity between Yupiktak Bista Manpower and Alaska State Department of Public Safety. Within partnership, the strong players although I cannot name all, were Yupiktak Bista Manpower staff, then Trooper Glen Godfrey, Commissioner Nix and his deputy under Governor Hammond, the staff of Alaska State Troopers Academy in Sitka, and most important of all the villages that agreed to sent the original VPO trainees to Sitka in the summer of 1979. The Alaska State Troopers Academy in Sitka made a special provision to train the very first VPOs trainees in the summer of 1979... all this for AVCP/Calista region.

Another key feature of the VPO program was the selection of distinctive uniform color that contrasted with Alaska State Trooper's uniform. To establish uniform color, several VPOs were invited to come to Bethel and select the colors as they are now today.

Shortly after the VPO program was established, Yupiktak Bista Manpower Director, John Angaiak signed a first VPO contract with the State of Alaska in the presence of Governor Hammond and his staff.

Other prime sponsors in rural Alaska wanted to create their own similar public safety programs, but instead were encouraged to join our newly established VPO program. It quickly became a statewide program. Yupiktak Bista Manpower Program witnessed its pioneering work becoming a statewide program.

Finally, on behalf of the region's police protection, I was privileged to have served the people of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region and create VPO program.

proper reporting -
evidentialist
VPSO - reporting / Front line work / Clean up ^{the scene}
limited funding underpaid - over worked - no vehicles - run
Troopers (salary) evenings - village no VPO - no debris
Don - reported arrested SA minor arrested
March - * answering machines

* lack of adequate homes
* high cost of living
* depression - suicide
* Off road communities

Shelter - open P/T since 2005

Protective orders ^{done} over phones ^{from villages}

Referral are made to TWC - women
Don't want to go to Bethel - 500 women

Education System

2005 - 3500 shelter niter
2006 crisis calls 9-5
2006-2007 400 women/children

2000 crisis calls
Suicide P/VISA/Elders
Referrals to Bethel TWC
No outreach (50 villages)
No after care programs in villages

When shelter
closed Women stand
out side shelter
back porch -
Steam house
Smoke house
trash bin.

Emmonak

Lenora Hootch

Emmonak Shelter

(907) 949-1434

Elders/Youth Program
Traditional

Establish Tribal Courts

State doesn't agree ^{recognize} Tribal Courts

no Tribal Codes - the State recognize

Elders for safety - help existing Tribal
we'll help them not send them away - Courts - example

Public Awareness

Community Education

Safe homes, when funded
fully.

* Lynn Hootch

Organized in 1979

from grassroots

Shelter since 1983

Funded by State

from 1983 to

2005

* Rural Program Cut-

funding / grants -

Federal funds -

Grants -

(VPO Armed w/
book / bullet
proof vest)
only

STATE NEEDS TO INC FUND @ VILLAGE LEVEL

SUGGESTIONS FOR VPO: VPSO IMPROVEMENT
SCH = NATURAL HELPERS (SUICIDE)

SCH @ EARLY AGE FOR A START. USING

FOR INPUT, START THE AWARENESS

(INC FUNDG. @ THE VILLAGE LEVEL)
" " FROM GOV.

CURRICULUM
STATE OF AK CAN
REMBURSE
EMMONAK
ALL VILLAGES

LOOK @ NCLB FOR POSSIBLE KARING & SHARING CLASSES.

FOR CAREERS SAKE, MAYBE PARDONS ON FELONS

HEALTH, RETIREMENT PAY 45K 55K

MUNICIPAL
ASSISTANCE
REVENUE
SHARING

MAJOR GLICK 949-1138

by Mike Prince EMMONAK AIC
(12)

Mtn Vlg (4)

Thank you for coming to Mtn. Village. It's not very often we have any of our 2 State representatives come to Mtn. to hear testimony on any subject or issue affecting our people.

We understand that you just came from Bethel to hear testimony on the same subject VPSO, I'm sure you heard pretty good testimony from the Bethel area.

Where does the funding of VPSO come from? I heard it may be coming from the feds.

We heard the funding for VPSO is dwindling, if its becoming less than the hiring of VPSO will also decrease. Our community cannot pick up the pieces when the state begins to cut off funding such as the VPSO program. The rural communities, especially the Wade Hampton Census District communities, have the highest unemployment rate, therefore the most poverty stricken circumstances you can see. The cost of gas and fuel oil is continually going up making it harder for government organizations to even try and pick up the pieces. Therefore, you should make every effort to stop the funding to VPSO to go down.

The Alaska tribes cannot even receive tribal police funding from the Dept. of Interior either through from BIA or compact funding because there is no reservations in Alaska except for one. So the small rural roadless communities really need your assistance to increase the funding for VPSO or expand the State Troopers such as St. Mary's.

We also heard that the Tribal cops grant from the U.S. Dept. of Justice that the tribes can apply for will now pass through the State, and this makes is more likely that the rural communities (tribes) will lose the funding. If the tribal cops grant becomes a pass through funding than the State and Tribes will have to work together when it is applied for by the Tribes. This does not mean that the Tribes will become subordinates to the State, we will become a government-to-government relationship. When our tribe apply for funding from the state for programs or projects, we have to sign a waiver of sovereignty immunity. We know that Alaska is PL 280 state along with California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon and Wisconsin, this means the tribes and state have concurrent jurisdiction. If the tribal cops is a pass through funding on behalf of tribes than we will have to have a government-to-government relationship. So the state legislatures have a lot of work to do. We know that couple of state legislatures have challenged the sovereignty of tribes in Alaska to Dept. of Interior and they wrote back there is Tribes in the state of Alaska. Our tribal government here at Mtn. have applied for and received funding for tribal cops. The tribes in Minnesota applied for a pass thru-funding from their state and was suppose to sign a waiver of sovereignty immunity inorder to receive that funding, the tribes refused to sign. Negotiations, debates began between the tribes and state, the state eventually passed a legislation stating the tribes would not have to sign a waiver. I think the state legislatures should work to pass a legislation such as Minnesota's and you should began to work on a similar bill.

James E. Anderson
1st Chief



ASA'CARSARMIUT TRIBAL COUNCIL

Mtn Vlg (9)

October 5, 2007

Senator Donald C. Olson, Chair
Alaska State Senate VPSO Task Force
Alaska State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: Improving Public Safety

Senator Olson:

Please accept this letter as a written testimony regarding the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program on finding ways to strengthen and improve public safety in Alaska, by identifying problems with the VPSO program and ways to address those problems.

At a joint meeting held by the City of Mountain Village, Azachorok Inc., and Asa'carsarmiut Tribal Council on August 28, 2007, the managers of each respected entities were directed to write letters to the Alaska State Senate VPSO Task Force addressing the VPSO program, on how they utilize the program and propose solutions to address problems each entity is experiencing with the current VPSO program.

Asa'carsarmiut Tribal Council utilizes the VPSO program in a couple of areas:

1. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) program - requests VPSO back up when conducting child abuse and domestic violence investigations, and depending on the home environment, assist in child removal/placement.
2. Tribal Courts - now that ATC tribal courts can hear cases, an MOA between ATC and City of Mountain Village is being drafted, to have the VPSO refer misdemeanor cases, and child/elder abuse and/or neglect cases, and to deliver Notice of Hearings to all who are requested to take part in the court hearings, among other things.

Areas for improvement are:

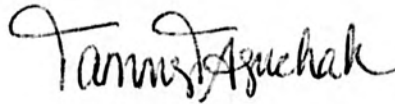
1. A couple of job duties should be added to the VPSO job description; assist all ICWA and Tribal Court programs in the communities that the VPSO program serves. The job duties should read; assist ICWA staff when home visits are required *and* serve Tribal Court Subpoena's or Notice of Hearings.
2. Schools, Tribes, local City Governments and Native Corporations in the communities where the VPSO program serves should take part in the evaluation of the VPSO, because the VPSO serves the whole community and not just the entity the MOA is placed with.
3. If all the entities in the communities cannot participate in the VPSO evaluation, then the Tribal/Traditional Councils where the VPSO program serves should at least be one of the parties included in the MOA, because of ICWA/Tribal Court issues. This way the Tribal/Traditional Councils could at least evaluate the VPSO on said issues.

October 5, 2007

4. Increase funding for the VPSO program to place one more VPSO in the larger communities like Mountain Village and Hooper Bay.

I'd like to thank you and your task force for taking the time out of your busy schedules to visit Mountain Village to hear our solutions for improvements in the VPSO program.

Sincerely,



Tammy T. Aguchak
Tribal Administrator

CC: City of Mountain Village
AVCP - VPSO Program
File

VPSO
Mayor
Patrolmen City of Nome

Excellent Suggestion

Prevention tips to Troopers
Emergency Responders

Elim incidents at Elm
Break-ins High School Clinic
Native Corp Post Office

One incident last ~~month~~ March or April
8 young people

What are you doing for that lapse

Excuses Kowak is responsible

↑ Attend City Council meeting

Dry Dealer That's who I

want to be like he's got

2 trucks 2 snowmobiles 2 pure breed
dogs 2 boats

Search & Rescue Every one is
Ready to go

THE ALASKA GUARD - HOPE AND HELP FOR RURAL ALASKA

The presence of an effective, well trained and equipped Alaska Guard detachment in each Alaska community could be a huge benefit in at least the following reasons:

- VPSO officers concurrently being members of the ALASKA GUARD could mean increased benefits, shared equipment and facilities, training, and mutual aide support.

- Military training, both basic training and specialist training should be very helpful to most of Alaska's rural teenagers. The discipline, physical fitness, team building, patriotism, and skills accumulated have been very helpful to Americans for generations and should continue to be helpful for rural Alaska youth.

- Rural Guardsman can and should form the trained and equipped core of local search and rescue (SAR) and fire fighting efforts as well as flood control and back up for the VPSO and Trooper personnel.

- Being a Guardsman should increase health benefits for the rural participants and reduce the welfare type payments flowing into the communities.

Drug Dealing : Confiscate house to
turn into housing or office space

Senator F Dyson

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE VPSO TASK FORCE

VPSO use of Guard facilities- In the 50 villages with Guard Armories, decide which have inadequate VPSO offices, storage, and holding cells that could utilize the unused portion of the Armory. Get a copy of the Kotzebue agreement and recommend joint occupancy of the Armory where that concept is justified. Ask local leaders for agreement to proceed.

Walt and Craig

VPSO & National Guard joint recruitment and/or personnel being members of both with benefits and training from both.

Walt and Craig

Funds from seized equipment and goods- Find out what needs to change to be able to use the sale of seized good to fund VPSO equipment or training or....

Walt and Talus

Expanded training and responsibilities for VPSOs

Decide how we can train VPSOs to; do some probation work, investigate some crimes, teach Dare/first aid/fire fighting/search and rescue/drug interdiction etc/obtain higher level of police certification and then get higher salaries based upon higher qualifications and utilization.

Walt

Standardized duty and reporting responsibilities- Decide how proactive and how much the VPSO needs to be actively on the job each day/week. Decide the standard reporting responsibilities ie; daily reports, check in by radio or phone twice a day or....

Walt

Solve liability issues -Talus

Prepare for the State Wide Conference on Public Safety in reference to the VPSO issues

Walt.

History of the VPSO Program

The VPSO program was a response to problems with the training, turnover, and performance of the village police officer program in the 1970s.¹ It was based largely on the idea that law enforcement ought to be "home-grown" rather than imposed, should encourage local initiative and participation, should incorporate local traditions, and should include elements of social work and public safety.² It combined responsibility for law enforcement, firefighting, search and rescue, water safety, and emergency medical into one position.³ And, as local employees under the direct control of village councils, it intended for VPSOs to be "responsive to community needs and priorities."⁴

James Messick and William Nix, two of the principal designers of the VPSO program, wanted villages to have control over the program. They believed that the imposed Western legal system was ineffective and was not supported by local people. However, they thought that villages lacked the organizational capacity to run the program. Therefore, they gave control of the management of the program to the regional native nonprofits.⁵ The State Troopers were to serve as technical providers but not tell the VPSOs what to do. And "the day to day control of the VPSOs ought to come from the city" or the village, increasing "local control and self-determination at the village level."⁶

Training was designed to be more extensive and relevant to rural needs and included follow-up training and supervision in the field by oversight Troopers specifically assigned to the program. A steady and sufficient income was intended to help reduce turn-over. In addition, the program represented "a long term career ladder for the rural, often Native individual to enter into the public safety field."⁷

Funding level and numbers of officers:

In 1979, a small pilot program was launched with an original request for \$500,000.⁸ However, when the legislature received the request, it increased the project's funding to over \$2.9 million, supporting 52 VPSO positions.⁹ And by FY 1982, the program had grown to 108 VPSO positions and 7 oversight officers, costing \$6,729,700 per year.¹⁰

¹ "The Village Public Safety Officer Program: A Conceptual Design to Improve Law Enforcement and Public Safety in the Rural Areas of Alaska," Department of Public Safety, Commissioner William R. Nix, 1980; "Innovation in Policing: Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship in the Development of the Village Public Safety Officer Program in Alaska," Otwin Marenin, 1989, p. 11-12.

² "Innovation in Policing" at p. 13.

³ Id.

⁴ "The Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program in Rural Alaska: Trends and Prospects," Otwin Marenin, 1989, p. 25.

⁵ "Innovation in Policing," at 17.

⁶ "The Village Public Safety Officer Program: A Conceptual Design to Improve Law Enforcement and Public Safety in the Rural Areas of Alaska," Department of Public Safety, Commissioner William R. Nix, 1980, p. 4, 11; "Innovation in Policing," at 17.

⁷ "Innovation in Policing," at 13.

⁸ "The VPSO Program, Concept, History and Operation," State of Alaska, undated, p. 5.

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ Id.

The program grew through the 1980s and 1990s. In FY 1990, the VPSO program supported 125 positions in 123 villages with a budget of \$6.5 million.¹¹ And by FY 2002, the program had a budget of \$9.1 million.¹² However, the program was cut in FY 2004 to \$5.8 million.¹³

Initial Response from the Troopers:

When the VPSO program was first created, the Troopers resisted the program "as it seemed to take away some of their authority and (possibly) cut into their budget and offended their sense of professional law enforcement."¹⁴ Commissioner Nix had to "read them the riot act," and threatened to move the program into another division and take away their control over the program.¹⁵

Qualifications:

The Alaska Police Standards Council was advised by the Attorney General's office in 1982 that VPSOs were not considered police officers unless they worked in a "second class" city for a municipal police department.¹⁶ The certification process then shifted to being part of the contractual arrangement with the regional nonprofits.¹⁷

One of the biggest problems with qualifications was the prohibition on hiring officers with arrest records. For example, in 1981 eighteen of the twenty six applicants for the VPSO program had arrest records.¹⁸ Commissioner Nix thought it was inappropriate to view arrest records as a barometer of moral character in rural communities. Instead, he thought the decision should rest with the residents of the villages themselves.¹⁹

Program operation:

In 1989, the program operated similarly to the way it operates today. The native nonprofit in each region contracted with the State to manage the VPSO program. The villages in each region appealed to their nonprofit for a VPSO, and the nonprofit allocated VPSOs based on available funding.²⁰ VPSOs were hired and fired by the nonprofit in close consultation with the village councils and the Troopers.²¹

Supervision by the Troopers:

Supervision for VPSOs in the 1980s was managed by oversight troopers in the regional hubs. In 1987, there were 5 oversight officers for 116 VPSOs.²² It was their

¹¹ Id; "The Village Public Safety Officer Program: Providing Public Safety Services to Rural Alaska," Patrick Jolley, 1990, p. 48; "The VPSO Program," Marenin, p. 25.

¹² "VPSO Comparison Gov Request to Authorized FY83 to FY05," State of Alaska, Department of Public Safety, 2004.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ "The VPSO Program," Marenin, at 18.

¹⁵ Id.

¹⁶ "Innovation in Policing, Marenin, p. 18

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ Id.

¹⁹ Id. at 19.

²⁰ "The VPSO Program," Marenin, p. 26

²¹ Id. at 26.

²² Id. at 27.

responsibility to check the work of the VPSOs, contact them by phone at least once a week, visit them in the field at least every two months, conduct in-field training, follow up on actions taken by the VPSOs, check their notebooks and records, ensure that VPSOs submit their bi-weekly reports on time, arrange for external training and travel, maintain contact with village council members, approve the hiring by VPSOs of emergency guards to hold detained or arrested suspects, and submit personnel evaluation forms on their VPSOs and a monthly recap record of their own activities.²³

VPSO training:

In the 1980s, new VPSO recruits attended a six week course at the Trooper Academy in Sitka. They received 60 hours of EMT training, 90 hours of firefighting training, and instructions on water safety, search and rescue, and how to organize a volunteer fire department.²⁴ They received no training in firearms. And every year, they were required to return for a one-week training course at the Academy.²⁵

Snapshot – TCC 1989:

In 1989, salaries for VPSOs in the Tanana Chiefs Conference region ranged from \$21,612 to \$28,080 per year.²⁶ There were 18 VPSOs and 6 VPSOs in the 42 villages in the region along with 6 State Troopers stationed permanently in the region.²⁷

²³ Id. at 27.

²⁴ Id. at 27.

²⁵ Id. at 27.

²⁶ Id. at 26.

²⁷ Id. at 26.

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

Several concerns were consistently voiced by many:

- There is a ***feeling of inequity*** whether perceived or real. Public safety is a State responsibility and they want to be treated fairly. Rural Alaskans deserve protection and are as entitled to peace and dignity as the residents of this state who happen to live in an urban area.
- There is also a ***disparity when you look at the area/number of miles covered*** by VPSOs compared to what is asked of a Trooper; it is not just about the population, other factors need to be considered.
- VPSOs really need the ***support and respect of their community***. And they need to ***understand the culture and village***. Which is a lot of why they ***need to come from the rural parts of the State***, not an urban community, no matter who hires them and how they are hired.
- There ***needs to be regional control and input***, including hiring, into their safety issues. Perhaps ***recruiting several VPSOs from larger villages*** to go to other villages; with those from smaller villages going to other villages rather than their own village. ***No one wants to arrest their family or friends***, so this would be one way around that, while still having someone who could adjust and fit in to the culture of the village in which they will reside.

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

- The issue of *whether or not VPSOs should become state employees* was argued from both sides, for and against, and is still an issue. Those in favor seem to be in favor of more equitable treatment on a par with troopers; while those against seem to be concerned with the possibility of losing control of hiring as well as the program itself to the urban areas.
- There needs to be *better communication with and better response from the Troopers.*
- There is support for *some type of elders' program*, in particular when dealing with youth. It could be an effective way of turning youth around and putting them on track, as well as keeping some out of the system.
- *Tribal courts* could also be an effective way of dealing with some crimes.

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

Many suggestions would require funding, or more funding:

- **Better pay** is needed to attract and retain VPSOs. They need to be able to support themselves and their families in the village where they live; and the cost of living in the villages is very high.
- **Better benefits** are needed so they have a future and can choose being a VPSO as a career. This includes health insurance and retirement, so they have something to look forward to.
- They want **housing** and they want it to be acceptable housing, not substandard. There is not always a place for them in the village and that makes it hard. Provision for acceptable housing was often voiced as lacking.
- **Being able to take leave** is also necessary. They get sick. They want to be able to take time off for leisure.
- Yet just as important is having **backup when the VPSO cannot be there** for whatever reason. If they are gone for leave or even for training, there is no one there to do their job. The **backup could be provided by a traveling cadre, or by having a second position, or in some other way.**

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

- They need to ***debrief and have counseling*** available when incidents occur.
Some kind of CISM program: Critical Incident Stress Management. Troopers are required to take time off and have counseling when critical incidents occur; yet VPSOs may have to go right back out in very little time, even just a few hours, after having spent all day and night on a suicide or other tragedy. And this is done without counseling or other support.
- ***Training*** is critical, including for search and rescue and the other areas of responsibility, not just law enforcement. Training when they start, as well as periodically after that. Perhaps have someone come once a month to check in and answer questions, or assist in knowing how to handle something differently, or to confirm the handling of a particular incident was correctly done. It should not just be something that is done when they are hired; it needs to be continuous if they are to be effective and capable in performing their jobs.
- They need a decent ***public safety building*** where prisoners can be housed, and ***things like blankets and pillows are provided***. VPSOs often use their own homes and/or their own pillows and blankets.
- They have many, many ***equipment needs*** that are not being met. Often VPSOs use their own equipment at their own expense. Here is a list of some of the things mentioned:

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

- Transportation like ATVs, snowmobiles, boats, etc and the gas to run them.
- Phone and fax, including sat phones and radios.
- Oil and electricity for the public safety building
- Stamps and other supplies

- Although uniforms are provided, due to various weather considerations, they are not always satisfactory. Having ***uniforms to reflect weather issues*** for the seasons is needed.

- * { - Perhaps some money could be put toward ***prevention***. Ideas mentioned were: ***education programs, street lights, and teen centers*** or other activities that would provide something to do.

- * { - Also mentioned was the need to ***promote VPSOs*** through some type of campaign similar to what is done for the troopers. Something to improve how they are viewed, ***show them as being respected*** and respectable.

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

Some things came up that may require changes to law:

- There is a need to have ***a way of pardoning past crimes in some cases*** so that capable people who are now on the right path can qualify. Too often, people do things when they are young that they regret and that they would not do as an adult. But having done something stupid when they were young can take them out of consideration for a VPSO position. People do change, especially if the mistake was made when they were young, and/or it was an isolated occurrence rather than a pattern of behavior. With the difficulty in finding VPSOs and with the high rate of suicide among youth especially, this change if done carefully could make a big difference.
 - Could the ***money from forfeitures*** in rural Alaska be used to pay for rural public safety? How much money is involved?
 - Could some kind of ***rural public safety fund be established*** to pay for some of what is needed? Perhaps the forfeiture dollars could go into such a fund if one could be established.
-
- Would it be possible for ***VPSOs to be able to confiscate drugs and alcohol***, including home brew, when it is discovered; and especially if the

VPSO Task Force List of Concerns and Recommendations, as Expressed at Hearings

community is dry or damp? Often people can be seen walking with it openly, but because they have not broken a law, nothing can be done.

The report of findings and recommendations is due February 15, 2008.

2-30
Use of Guard

RECOMMENDATIONS

MORE VALUE FOR VPSO STAFF

- PAY
- BENEFITS
- TRAINING
- CAREER PATH
- SUPPORT / RELIEF / COUNSELING /
- HOUSING / EQUIPMENT
- LOCAL SUPPORT
- STATE SUPPORT - COMPUTERS / BACK-UP - / VEHICLES
- FUEL
- CRITERIA FOR VILLAGES TO GET VPSO
 - VIABLE (BY DENALI CAN STDS)
 - DISTANCE FROM TROOPER POST
 - LOCAL SUPPORT & COOPERATION / DIVISIONS
AND ACCEPTANCE

ADVANCE LEVELS FOR VPSO ADVANCEMENT

- PASS OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION
- REGIONAL SUPERVISOR RANK
- COM. PILOTS LICENSE

VPSO - ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD RELATIONSHIP

- SHARED FACILITIES
- SHARED EQUIPMENT
- SHARED PERSONNEL - VPSO IN GUARD

EXPANDED Role For VPSO

- PROBATION SUPERVISION
- DARE INSTRUCTOR
- SOME CRIME INVESTIGATION
-

RELATED ISSUES

- LIABILITY
- CUSTODY OF SEIZED GOODS
- ACCESS TO FUNDS FROM SEIZED STUFF
- MORE TROOPERS - HOW MANY - WHERE
- VPSO - TPO - ISSUES
- LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS
- CORPORATION CONTRIBUTIONS

11/20/07

VPSO Task Force -

- DARE Training for all VPSO's to work w/ children in schools -
are expected in villages to be
- VPSO's (as) Supervisors of VPO's/TPO's
This creates liability possibilities - need to address this w/ villagers where we place VPSO's and Trooper oversight
- Insurance limitations on VPSO's coverage -
\$10 million - no commentary by Contractors
State DPS - determines - When and with whom -
- VPSO's are limited to funding for one year - Contracts that are signed are charged that causes decreases to existing Contracts and need for VPSO's in villages continue to exist - no coordinated background checks - VPSO's to be at fault when they are not making reports due to lack of crime or other activity -

(2)

Grant Administration % VPSO's are being paid annual leave that they have accrued during the year @ the end of grant year - due to lack of monies that is not funded for benefits - annual leave health benefits - Vehicle purchases are done w/ other grants & funding unrelated to VPSO Contract - Expect villages to provide insurance coverage -

i.e.
Wellness #ing

Vehicles include:

ATV's
Trucks
Snowmachines

VPSO's pay for their own fuel, repairs and parts.

VPSO's are expected to report, investigate crimes, deal w/ misdemeanors - Recent State VPSO' handbook - deal w/ felonies when requested to do so by Troopers - VPSO's are expected to turn in reports to oversight Troopers for Troopers to build cases that are dealt w/ in court -

Tribal courts - should be considered part of solution to prevent crimes or other problems in a village - Not do "sovereignty concerns", need more partnership programs between all entities -

Salary & pay scale

(3)

Pay determinations should be left up to regional contractors - not pre-determined by State - DPS -
shows that it is a restrictive program keeps VPSO's at lowest level of pay for a lot of work that they do -
- recognizes cost of living differences -

Need for better communications between VPSO and oversight troopers, especially after hours VPSO's deal w/ life or death situations a lot of times w/out back-ups
- Need another VPSO in village -

State Troopers stationed in regional hubs or subregional locations - Need to respond to reports of crimes or threats of crime - they may be only law enforcement in the villages - What is expected of a VPSO's should also apply State Troopers at these villages - i.e. reporting crimes, responding to disturbance of peace per State Constitution -

Sen. French biggest concerns - focus on

Size of village

Concessions to location proximity to other
villages

Salary

Advancement opportunities

Housing

List of solutions – compiled by Loretta Bullard from speakers at the hearings

- federal funding 75% 4 yrs D. Justice → IHS*
- ✓ Reinstated cops program
 - ✓ Increase VPSO wage
 - ✓ Make housing available
 - ✓ Circulate VPSO itinerant amongst villages
 - ✓ Provide medical, dental, (retirement benefits)
 - ✓ Provide backup to VPSO
 - ✓ Build community support
 - Have VPSOs become State employees
 - ✓ Provide equipment so they don't have to use their own boat, snow machine
 - More communication with oversight Troopers
 - Tiered law enforcement
 - Provide assertiveness training to locals to confront alcohol/drug dealers
 - Have bush airlines search all bags
 - Need to teach respect for law enforcement
 - VPOs need training! SAR clueless
 - More magistrates in villages
 - Juvenile offenses to Tribal court
 - Train VPSO to do prevention with kids
 - More than 1 VPSO per community
 - VPSO provide leadership/direction to VPOs
 - Do training via video conferencing
 - Place Troopers in villages
 - Hire VPSOs, place from other villages

List of solutions – compiled by Loretta Bullard from speakers at the hearings

- Pay O:M/rent to cities for VPSO space
- Build housing/jail cell combo
- Fix up/renovate Public Safety buildings
- Look at VPSO P/P - amend/waive if need be
- Send Trooper in to train VPO – come in once per month to check on them
- Stop drugs/alcohol from getting into villages in the first place
- VPSOs need organized trauma debriefing program
- Form VPSO endowment fund
- Western AK Narco team – direct money to VPSO program
- Train VPSO/AST to fly planes
- Station VPSO/AST in units
- State provide rent/utilities for VPSOs in villages
- Lower duties of VPSO or pay what they're worth
- AST=higher paid prisoner transport
- ✱ - Develop 5-10-20 year plan to improve public safety
- ✱ - Model VPSO program on Health Aide program
 - Cultural sensitivity training for all AST
 - State get over paranoia over W/W tribes
- ✱ - Develop partnerships to access money to strengthen program
 - Need money to run Tribal courts
 - Promote/hire VPSOs
 - Develop youth Tribal diversion panel for drinking youth – replicate throughout the State to address juvenile delinquent problems

List of solutions – compiled by Loretta Bullard from speakers at the hearings

- ~~Examine closely - discuss closely with AVCP~~
- Give each Tribal Council the option to search/seize alcohol/drugs
- Provide avenue for waiver of clean background criteria
- If convicted of felony, can't carry weapons – need to allow exemption for hunting
- Improve services in rural Alaska to prevent Mis behavior
- Identify roles of tribe-city-state as it relates to law enforcement
- Need money for youth courts in villages
- Tribes need to be able to intervene and destroy home brew/drug selling
- Bump VPSO salary schedule to allow for CPI
- Show VPSO qualifications at career days
- Need a 911 help line (easy access)
- Expand the number of kids who can attend Nat'l Indian Policing Academy
- Teach kids (3rd/4th grades) about laws, law enforcement respect - put in curriculum
- Help fund Elder intervention program in Emmonak
- Rural exchange program – village to village
- VPOs need training, orientation, ethics, etc confidentiality
- Need to develop/shape law enforcement stats
- Need to include rural Alaskans on justice related boards/issues
- Abraham – Agathluk VPO example of “turned around”
 - o 5+ years working as a VPO
 - o VPO all time low
 - o Work whole year, get two weeks

List of solutions – compiled by Loretta Bullard from speakers at the hearings

- Cases stacked up
- Only 2 people working
- ^{Nb} ~~D6~~ training
- Has more support
- Has 2 vehicles
- Applicants can't hire – on probation or convicted felon
- Want teams
- Doing good in Bethel stopping drugs/alcohol
- Need search warrants – can't just confiscate
- VPSOs serve more than 1 village
- Arm the VPSOs
- When hiring, look at the character of the applicant; need to be strong
- Increase punishment for bootleggers
- Put more Troopers in the villages
- Provide report writing training
- Add to ^{job description} ~~juvenile delinquent~~ – assist ICWA (?) staff when home visits required –
^{orders} ~~serve court hearings~~
- Tribes participate in evaluating VPSO
- AST needs to spend quality time in village
- Provide training to VPSOs to help health aides and ~~QBC~~ [✓] (?)
- Cover indirect costs fully
- Look at training schedule
- Need housing for VPSOs

List of solutions – compiled by Loretta Bullard from speakers at the hearings

- Better prepare VPSOs for academy
- Liaison in regional non-profits – ^{state}~~staff~~ employee over State VPSOs
- VPSO need support at their ground level
- John – Elim – need to get whole village involved in providing law and order in village
- Have native organization provide cultural training to VPSOs

Village Public Safety Committee – Fire, SAR
Citizen patrols
community policing
neighborhood watch

NAEC

Kawerak testimony to the State VPSO Task Force on VPSO Issues - November 5, 2007.

5 The Alaska State Constitution states: "All persons have a natural right to life, liberty and are entitled to equal rights, opportunities and protection under the law." In the arena of Public Safety and "equal protection", this is not the case. Many, many communities in rural Alaska are without any law enforcement whatsoever. In these communities, residents call upon the Alaska State Troopers to respond when situations arise in their communities where law enforcement is needed. Unfortunately, because of weather, other priorities, and Trooper staffing levels, in many instances, the AST are not always able to respond promptly, with the net result that situations are not contained, lives are put at risk or lost, evidence is lost or destroyed, and people are victimized and live in fear. If a property crime occurs in Rural Alaska, you can wait months for Trooper response.

We encourage the Alaska State Legislature and the State DPS to make a commitment to support the VPSO program and rural Law Enforcement and budget accordingly. Certainly, over the past four years, the VPSO contractors have felt like the VPSO program has not been a priority of the State . . . and in fact have felt like the unwanted step children of the State. In an early meeting with the VPSO contractors, the previous DPS Commissioner stated very succinctly, that "when it came to asking the Legislature for a dollar for a VPSO or a dollar for a Trooper. . . he would ask for a dollar for the Troopers every time."

We believe there is much room for improvement and welcome this opportunity to make recommendations on how the provision of public safety in rural Alaska can be improved.

There is a public interest in keeping our children, families and communities safe. The safety and security of citizens in our communities is a fundamental responsibility of government. If the State of Alaska cannot or is not going to diligently seek to fund and implement the protection of its citizens, we recommend that the State of Alaska support a recommendation that was presented to the Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission - to restore to Alaska's federally recognized Tribal Councils on a pilot basis, the ability to control alcohol and illegal substances within five miles of the village radius. The old saying: "Lead, Follow or Get out of the Way" comes to mind. The State of Alaska has opposed restoring the ability of the IRA and Traditional Councils to address alcohol and drug issues, asserting that the responsibility for law enforcement rests with the State, but the state has not adequately met that responsibility and has opposed efforts by village councils to regain control over their community.

Probably 95% of the crimes in rural Alaska occur when the individual is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. . . . and while the State DPS has done a much better job cutting down on the flow of alcohol and drugs to the villages. . . . anecdotal evidence suggests that people are increasingly "brewing their own." Given the current inability to control/address alcohol issues in rural Alaska, we are fearful what will happen once meth gets a foothold in the bush. It doesn't have a foothold yet, but people need tools at the local level to contain these issues before they gain a foothold. Currently the system is - call the VPSO (if your community has one - 130 rural communities are without), call the

occurs frequently – and both the health aides and the VPSO's don't want to do it. Who can blame them? No one wants the responsibility of cleaning up a scene after a traumatic death! Over the last ten years, we have had 62 suicides in the Bering Straits Region. Every single one of these suicides had to be responded to . . . and cleaned up after. These are the very real issues that are discussed at our board meetings. . . . because there is a need and because alcohol and drugs, and the resulting impacts on our families and children are not adequately controlled within our communities.

The VPSO program in the Bering Strait Region and in other regions in the State is having a hard time with recruiting applicants. Kawerak does not receive any funds for recruiting. I recommend that the State start an ad campaign to recruit for the VPSO positions as they do for other State programs, particularly as this was an activity that the state stated they would undertake (and was funded to do) in the 2005 IHS grant's scope of work the State received. For example, during the Alaska Federation of Natives convention in October 2006, the Alaska State Troopers had a nice recruitment display for AST, current color photos, brochures to hand out and small items to pass out, for example: pens, cups and breath mints. Next to the display was the VPSO recruitment poster board with outdated photos and no other advertisement materials.

Although there has been an improvement in the starting wages of the VPSO, the VPSO salary is still not at market. Currently, the VPSO starting salary is \$16.55 an hour, there are also a parole and probation funds that can bring up to an additional \$2.50 an hour to the VPSO salary. This is up from \$15.05/hour 1 year ago. Another positive change is the addition of retention incentive bonuses added to the salary schedule. Currently there is no cost of living allowance (COLA) in the program; we recommend the State add a COLA to the program. VPSO's, once they reach Step M in the pay scale, (which is at 8.5 years of service) stop receiving pay raises. We would like to see the VPSO program continue to provide raises to help with retention. Kawerak annually adjusts our corporate wide salary schedule to adjust for the previous year's rate of inflation per the Anchorage Consumer Price Index – with the exception of the VPSO program. We take the Anchorage CPI rates for the two previous six month periods, add them together, divide them by two – and adjust our salary schedule up effective January 1 of each year to correct for the previous year's inflation. For 2007, for example, our corporate wide salary schedule was increased by 3.97% - which brought our salary schedule current to the rate of inflation for Anchorage. We do this annually to keep our schedule current with inflation – since if we didn't, the 3% merit increases that we provide for above average performance would not even keep current with inflation. The State contract prohibits us from annually adjusting the VPSO salaries to keep current with inflation.

2 Wage

Budget

Most of the cities' holding cells and office spaces are in dire need of repair or upgrades. Most cities in rural Alaska are financially hurting due to the cut of revenue sharing and higher costs of operating (i.e., high fuel, insurance, PERS). Some communities in the Bering Strait Region have only one holding cell that is not suitable for holding both adults and juveniles together. Some buildings do not have running water and use a bucket in the corner of the holding cell (not even a honey bucket!) for human waste. Kawerak recommends that the State assist with upgrading the holding facilities and office

funding turned back in

vehicle control.) A career track would promote retention of VPSO's and help ease DPS's recruitment difficulties for Troopers.

Kawerak requests that the Commissioner "develop a template cross-deputization agreement between the State and tribes that can be used as a basis for individually negotiated agreements." State policy makers question the existence of tribes in Alaska . . . but in the field, we have found that the Troopers have been willing to work with Tribal Peace Officers. In one of our communities, we were unable to hire a VPSO for five years, since it was a larger community with many social problems, and residents were unwilling to put their lives on the line for the \$12-13 an hour. The Tribal Council in desperation funded two Tribal Peace Officers out of their Bureau of Indian Affairs funding, to maintain law and order. The Tribal Peace Officers would arrest individuals and call the Troopers. In this instance, the Troopers had no problem working with the Tribal Peace Officers. Somehow the State policy and legal people need to move beyond the rhetoric and to set in place solutions and systems that work collaboratively and effectively in rural Alaska. We were fortunate in eventually hiring an individual to work in this community, who did a wonderful job for three years. He resigned to become a Security Guard because he could make \$22 an hour, with considerably less stress.

There is a perception perhaps, that VPSO's don't receive much training. In fact they do. Currently, VPSO's receive 602 hours of training at the Sitka Academy in order to become a certified VPSO. Municipal Police Officers and Alaska State Troopers each receive 900 (?) hours of training. Pretty much the only difference between the training provided to VPSO's and AST & Municipal Police Officers is that AST and Municipal Police Officers receive training on handling guns and cars. Certified VPSO's have undergone significant training (for which we are very thankful), but it's our perception that the VPSO's are not adequately recognized (or compensated) for their training and the work they do. The VPSO's are truly the "First Responders in the Last Frontier" and they need to be afforded the respect, support and pay, their very difficult position is due.

(Kawerak has not had a grant awarded on time since 2003.) In 2004, Kawerak was prepared to send letters of termination to the VPSO's due to the fact we still did not have a grant in place. Our grant awards have been consistently awarded well after the start of the state fiscal year. By not receiving grant awards on time, Kawerak is placed in the position of funding the VPSO program out of our own fund balance (which would otherwise be earning interest) or laying off the VPSO's. We have kept the VPSO's on staff - and footed the bill out of our own pockets. We recommend that the State award the grants in a timely manner.

timely

DPS needs to allow contractors more flexibility with the VPSO budget. I would recommend that if there is lapsed money in the VPSO personnel line item that the Non-profits (in consultation with DPS) could spend the money on much needed equipment or supplies, for example, gas, snow machines, ATV, VHF radios or computers. This will provide the tools and equipment required for the VPSO's to aid in Search and Rescue, community patrol, and basic communications. Guidelines could be set up during the contract negotiations.

CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)
HAVE BEEN REFILMED TO
ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR PAGINATION



Rev. 6/98

Central Microfilm Services
Department of Education & Early Development
State of Alaska

List of solutions – compiled by Loretta Bullard from speakers at the hearings

- Better prepare VPSOs for academy
- Liaison in regional non-profits – ^{state}~~staff~~ employee over State VPSOs
- VPSO need support at their ground level
- John – Elim – need to get whole village involved in providing law and order in village
- Have native organization provide cultural training to VPSOs

Village Public Safety Committee – Fire, SAR
Citizen patrols
community policing
neighborhood watch

NAEC

949- 1229 Martin Moore

Kawerak testimony to the State VPSO Task Force on VPSO Issues – November 5, 2007.

5 The Alaska State Constitution states: "All persons have a natural right to life, liberty and are entitled to equal rights, opportunities and protection under the law." In the arena of Public Safety and "equal protection", this is not the case. Many, many communities in rural Alaska are without any law enforcement whatsoever. In these communities, residents call upon the Alaska State Troopers to respond when situations arise in their communities where law enforcement is needed. Unfortunately, because of weather, other priorities, and Trooper staffing levels, in many instances, the AST are not always able to respond promptly, with the net result that situations are not contained, lives are put at risk or lost, evidence is lost or destroyed, and people are victimized and live in fear. If a property crime occurs in Rural Alaska, you can wait months for Trooper response.

We encourage the Alaska State Legislature and the State DPS to make a commitment to support the VPSO program and rural Law Enforcement and budget accordingly. Certainly, over the past four years, the VPSO contractors have felt like the VPSO program has not been a priority of the State . . . and in fact have felt like the unwanted step children of the State. In an early meeting with the VPSO contractors, the previous DPS Commissioner stated very succinctly, that "when it came to asking the Legislature for a dollar for a VPSO or a dollar for a Trooper. . . he would ask for a dollar for the Troopers every time."

We believe there is much room for improvement and welcome this opportunity to make recommendations on how the provision of public safety in rural Alaska can be improved.

There is a public interest in keeping our children, families and communities safe. The safety and security of citizens in our communities is a fundamental responsibility of government. If the State of Alaska cannot or is not going to diligently seek to fund and implement the protection of its citizens, we recommend that the State of Alaska support a recommendation that was presented to the Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission - to restore to Alaska's federally recognized Tribal Councils on a pilot basis, the ability to control alcohol and illegal substances within five miles of the village radius. The old saying: "Lead, Follow or Get out of the Way" comes to mind. The State of Alaska has opposed restoring the ability of the IRA and Traditional Councils to address alcohol and drug issues, asserting that the responsibility for law enforcement rests with the State, but the state has not adequately met that responsibility and has opposed efforts by village councils to regain control over their community.

Probably 95% of the crimes in rural Alaska occur when the individual is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. . . . and while the State DPS has done a much better job cutting down on the flow of alcohol and drugs to the villages. . . . anecdotal evidence suggests that people are increasingly "brewing their own." Given the current inability to control/address alcohol issues in rural Alaska, we are fearful what will happen once meth gets a foothold in the bush. It doesn't have a foothold yet, but people need tools at the local level to contain these issues before they gain a foothold. Currently the system is - call the VPSO (if your community has one - 130 rural communities are without), call the

VPO (if your community has one – who has no training and may have alcohol, drug, domestic violence or other convictions on their record) or call the Alaska State Troopers – and hope they respond timely. There is room for improvement in the existing system.

The VPSO program has worked well in the past. Over the past seven or eight years, it has not worked as well, but the VPSO Program does have the potential to be very effective in providing public safety to those of us living in rural Alaska if it receives adequate fiscal, programmatic and structural support. Some background:

In the 1980's, even though wages were extremely low for the VPSO's (\$11.16/hour), there were at the time, approximately 100 individuals employed as VPSO's around the state. There is one major structural difference between the program today and how the program was operated 15 years ago. At that time, various troopers were assigned to serve as the oversight trooper to an average of 6 or 7 specific VPSO's. It was a very structured connection. The assigned trooper worked closely with his or her VPSO's and provided support, law enforcement supervision, an avenue to vent as it relates to situations encountered during the work day and guidance – on a daily or weekly basis. Troopers traveled regularly to the villages, not just to investigate felony crimes. Today, I'm sure the Troopers endeavor to keep in touch with the VPSO's, but it is a much less structured relationship, with the net result that VPSO's often feel like they are on the front line with little to no support. I think that re-structuring the Trooper support of the VPSO's in the field, to the model that was in place 15 years ago, would help greatly in improving VPSO retention in the field.

VPSO's need support and an avenue to vent. VPSO's often have to secure suicide, homicide or accidental death scenes. After the fact, they are sometimes called upon to "clean up" the scene after the body has been removed. (So the family doesn't have to.) They are the first responder to serious gun shots and other accidents in the village. The Health Aides do not respond to a scene until they have informed by the VPSO that the scene is secure. (We don't know how these situations are handled in communities without law enforcement.) Because of their position, the VPSO's are exposed to severe trauma scenes. They know who in the village are experiencing or perpetrating: domestic violence; assaults; theft; violating the local alcohol ordinance; and who may be neglecting their child or sexually abusing children. They know pretty much everything unpleasant about their neighbors. In many instances they are not able to do much about the activity, because the individual has to be apprehended in accordance with State statutes and convicted in a State court of law. If they arrest or detain members of the community, they and their family can experience hostility, threats of retribution, harassment and other negativity. All of these situations create stress on the VPSO. They need an avenue to discuss confidential issues and they need support in a structured, organized way.

At our 2006 joint Norton Sound Health Corporation/Kawerak full board meeting, staff were directed to seek funds to pay individuals to clean up after major trauma situations in the villages. Because we have so many suicides in our villages (many of which are teenagers or young adults under the influence of alcohol), clean up of suicide scenes

occurs frequently – and both the health aides and the VPSO's don't want to do it. Who can blame them? No one wants the responsibility of cleaning up a scene after a traumatic death! Over the last ten years, we have had 62 suicides in the Bering Straits Region. Every single one of these suicides had to be responded to . . . and cleaned up after. These are the very real issues that are discussed at our board meetings. . . . because there is a need and because alcohol and drugs, and the resulting impacts on our families and children are not adequately controlled within our communities.

The VPSO program in the Bering Strait Region and in other regions in the State is having a hard time with recruiting applicants. Kawerak does not receive any funds for recruiting. I recommend that the State start an ad campaign to recruit for the VPSO positions as they do for other State programs, particularly as this was an activity that the state stated they would undertake (and was funded to do) in the 2005 IHS grant's scope of work the State received. For example, during the Alaska Federation of Natives convention in October 2006, the Alaska State Troopers had a nice recruitment display for AST, current color photos, brochures to hand out and small items to pass out, for example: pens, cups and breath mints. Next to the display was the VPSO recruitment poster board with outdated photos and no other advertisement materials.

Although there has been an improvement in the starting wages of the VPSO, the VPSO salary is still not at market. Currently, the VPSO starting salary is \$16.55 an hour, there are also a parole and probation funds that can bring up to an additional \$2.50 an hour to the VPSO salary. This is up from \$15.05/hour 1 year ago. Another positive change is the addition of retention incentive bonuses added to the salary schedule. Currently there is no cost of living allowance (COLA) in the program; we recommend the State add a COLA to the program. VPSO's, once they reach Step M in the pay scale, (which is at 8.5 years of service) stop receiving pay raises. We would like to see the VPSO program continue to provide raises to help with retention. Kawerak annually adjusts our corporate wide salary schedule to adjust for the previous year's rate of inflation per the Anchorage Consumer Price Index – with the exception of the VPSO program. We take the Anchorage CPI rates for the two previous six month periods, add them together, divide them by two – and adjust our salary schedule up effective January 1 of each year to correct for the previous year's inflation. For 2007, for example, our corporate wide salary schedule was increased by 3.97% - which brought our salary schedule current to the rate of inflation for Anchorage. We do this annually to keep our schedule current with inflation – since if we didn't, the 3% merit increases that we provide for above average performance would not even keep current with inflation. The State contract prohibits us from annually adjusting the VPSO salaries to keep current with inflation.

2 Wages

Budget

Most of the cities' holding cells and office spaces are in dire need of repair or upgrades. Most cities in rural Alaska are financially hurting due to the cut of revenue sharing and higher costs of operating (i.e., high fuel, insurance, PERS). Some communities in the Bering Strait Region have only one holding cell that is not suitable for holding both adults and juveniles together. Some buildings do not have running water and use a bucket in the corner of the holding cell (not even a honey bucket!) for human waste. Kawerak recommends that the State assist with upgrading the holding facilities and office

funding turned back in

space including maintenance and operational funding based on the needs of the community. The cities are incurring tremendous liability by holding detainees in substandard facilities – and they are probably not even aware they are exposing themselves to this liability, nor do they have insurance. We're fortunate that more people have not died while being held in substandard holding cells in the villages. We also recommend that the State allow the contractors to provide an office rental fee to the local city or other entity housing the VPSO Office. Electrical, heating, janitorial and other facility expenses have increased tremendously, and with no revenue sharing, the expense has fallen solely on the City offices to provide free office space and other utilities to the VPSO. This is another state imposed contractual requirement. The State has consistently refused to make funds available for VPSO office lease; rather they require the city to donate free office space to the VPSO. This is particularly hard to understand when DPS consistently returns funding to the State General Fund. We speculate that the state takes this position to have the cities make an in-kind contribution to the program. . . . but when the city has no financial resources whatsoever coming in . . . it's like trying to squeeze blood out of a turnip. The State certainly does not make the same demand to cities where Trooper outposts are located. Why then, does DPS impose this requirement on Cities with VPSO's? Cities are finding it difficult to heat and maintain City facilities. We're amazed that more city offices haven't completely shut their doors over the past four years.

Frequently, we hear that if rural people want services, they should tax themselves more. . . or do without. Currently, every city in the Bering Straits Region imposes a sale tax ranging anywhere from 3-6% on the cost of already expensive goods. This is the only reason the cities have survived the last four years. This when the majority of people living in the villages exist on very low household incomes. It's not possible to tax ourselves to fund a police department in every village. In many communities, the cities are using some of their very limited tax revenues to fund Village Police Officers, which in 99.9% of the cases, are untrained individuals, who, because they are a municipal employee, are eligible to carry guns. The State constitution outlines some very specific government services that the State of Alaska is responsible for providing to every state citizen. We encourage the administration and state legislature to meet these obligations fully . . . or as stated earlier, support Tribal Councils efforts to regain the authority to police at the local level.

As quoted in the interim report of the Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission (ARJLEC), Kawerak supports the idea "to develop a statewide, uniform and tiered system of certification and training for police and public safety officers with a reasonable opportunity for advancement that could culminate in full APOC police officer certification. The first tier of certification would require a reasonable minimum level of certification and training, including non-police function training, to ensure professional competency and service delivery, with tribally-employed officers encouraged to participate. Over the years, 4 or 5 of Kawerak's former VPSO's, went on to become Alaska State Troopers. We support this and think this is wonderful. However, in order to become Troopers, these individuals had to attend and complete a trooper academy, which is basically the same as a VPSO academy, (except Troopers receive training in guns and

vehicle control.) A career track would promote retention of VPSO's and help ease DPS's recruitment difficulties for Troopers.

Kawerak requests that the Commissioner "develop a template cross-deputization agreement between the State and tribes that can be used as a basis for individually negotiated agreements." State policy makers question the existence of tribes in Alaska . . . but in the field, we have found that the Troopers have been willing to work with Tribal Peace Officers. In one of our communities, we were unable to hire a VPSO for five years, since it was a larger community with many social problems, and residents were unwilling to put their lives on the line for the \$12-13 an hour. The Tribal Council in desperation funded two Tribal Peace Officers out of their Bureau of Indian Affairs funding, to maintain law and order. The Tribal Peace Officers would arrest individuals and call the Troopers. In this instance, the Troopers had no problem working with the Tribal Peace Officers. Somehow the State policy and legal people need to move beyond the rhetoric and to set in place solutions and systems that work collaboratively and effectively in rural Alaska. We were fortunate in eventually hiring an individual to work in this community, who did a wonderful job for three years. He resigned to become a Security Guard because he could make \$22 an hour, with considerably less stress.

There is a perception perhaps, that VPSO's don't receive much training. In fact they do. Currently, VPSO's receive 602 hours of training at the Sitka Academy in order to become a certified VPSO. Municipal Police Officers and Alaska State Troopers each receive 900 (?) hours of training. Pretty much the only difference between the training provided to VPSO's and AST & Municipal Police Officers is that AST and Municipal Police Officers receive training on handling guns and cars. Certified VPSO's have undergone significant training (for which we are very thankful), but it's our perception that the VPSO's are not adequately recognized (or compensated) for their training and the work they do. The VPSO's are truly the "First Responders in the Last Frontier" and they need to be afforded the respect, support and pay, their very difficult position is due.

(Kawerak has not had a grant awarded on time since 2003.) In 2004, Kawerak was prepared to send letters of termination to the VPSO's due to the fact we still did not have a grant in place. Our grant awards have been consistently awarded well after the start of the state fiscal year. By not receiving grant awards on time, Kawerak is placed in the position of funding the VPSO program out of our own fund balance (which would otherwise be earning interest) or laying off the VPSO's. We have kept the VPSO's on staff - and footed the bill out of our own pockets. We recommend that the State award the grants in a timely manner.

DPS needs to allow contractors more flexibility with the VPSO budget. I would recommend that if there is lapsed money in the VPSO personnel line item that the Non-profits (in consultation with DPS) could spend the money on much needed equipment or supplies, for example, gas, snow machines, ATV, VHF radios or computers. This will provide the tools and equipment required for the VPSO's to aid in Search and Rescue, community patrol, and basic communications. Guidelines could be set up during the contract negotiations.

On a positive note, budget modifications are now turned around in a timely manner compared to previous years.

The VPSO contract places significant liability burdens on the regional non-profits and allows the State to exercise close control over the VPSO program while escaping any responsibility for the program. Currently the State negotiates and purchases liability insurance for all the VPSO contractors in the State. The contractors budget for the insurance in our budgets, but we never actually receive the money. The State takes the money from the contracts and purchases the insurance on behalf of all the VPSO contractors in the State. We don't mind never seeing the money, since by "bulk purchasing" on behalf of all the contractors, the state is able to get a better deal in terms of cost. The problem is the State is negotiating and purchasing the insurance levels without consulting with the VPSO contractors. A State Trooper is not necessarily versed in insurance and liability issues and could benefit from consulting with the various regional non-profit staff that deal with this issue on a regular basis.

The contracts should provide for equal allocation of liability risk between the State and non-profit corporations instead of a one-sided approach. The State should purchase liability insurance for the non-profits with adequate scope of coverage and coverage amounts. The insurance the non-profits are required to purchase should be closely reviewed and revised to assure that it is affordable and adequate.

The previous administration attempted to force consolidation of the VPSO Program to one - three contractors for the last four years. The contractors spent a large amount of energy fending off that attempt. We believe that State DPS was pursuing this approach as a cost saving measure - thinking that by decreasing the nine-contractors to 1 or 3, it would save in non-profit administrative costs, with additional dollars being spent on VPSO salaries. While it would have saved on administrative costs, Alaska is a huge state . . . and local knowledge and the ability to work closely with the city and tribal governments and village residents in support of the VPSO program and law enforcement, is a critical component of the program. You can't have an effective working relationship if the Director of a program is 750 miles away, has never and will never travel to a majority of remote communities, interact with very diverse councils, or meet with VPSO's and Troopers at a local or regional level. We encourage you to seek input from the Manillaq Corporation as to how they perceive the VPSO program working in their region. . . . given that it is/was administered by the Kodiak Area Native Corporation, whose main offices are located in Kodiak.

The other major area which directly affects our ability to recruit and retain VPSO's, is the lack of housing at the village level. A number of our villages have indicated a preference for outside individuals to be hired as VPSO's. That way, the VPSO doesn't have the added stress or perceived nepotism issues that arise from having to arrest (or not arresting) close family, friends and relatives. The problem is, when we hire a VPSO from outside the village, the individual needs to be able to rent a place to stay in the village. Decent housing and rental units in our villages are in very short supply, with every

#

Unlops

Monique
Myra
Fred Dyson
Taher

Denali
Commissioner

housing unit filled to capacity with two or three generations . . . because there is no housing available. When VPSO's come from outside, they are often shocked at the quality of the housing that is available to them and soon resign because of the housing conditions. The housing units available in most communities are likely old, with mold issues, poorly insulated and therefore very expensive to heat, small, lack water and sewer, and generally dilapidated. VPSO's (particularly those with families) don't stick around when faced with this kind of housing.

Housing

BSRHA

Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority, our regional housing authority has indicated that a BSRHA housing unit can be set aside for rent/use by a VPSO in each community, if the Tribal Council passes a resolution approving that action. We have sent a letter to each council encouraging them to do this. However, the Council may or may not take this step. The tribal council has to consider setting aside one unit for the VPSO, versus trying to meet the needs of 10-20-30 families in need of housing within the community, who have been on a list, waiting to purchase a home for the last five-ten years.

We know that the DPS has taken steps to provide for Trooper Housing in rural areas and have expressed interest in building trooper outstations in some of the sub regional centers around the state. We support constructing trooper housing and facilities in those communities where housing and facilities are not available. But we also encourage the State to help address the need for VPSO housing in our very remote, over crowded communities by designing and perhaps helping to construct modular housing units for VPSO's. We understand that upon construction of the Trooper housing in Bethel, troopers in Bethel who owned their own homes, relocated to the Trooper housing and subsequently rented their own homes out for income.

On a positive note, I wanted to announce that the Kawerak's Board of Directors recently established a VPSO work group to examine ways that people and councils at the local level can help recruit, support, recognize and encourage retention of VPSO's.

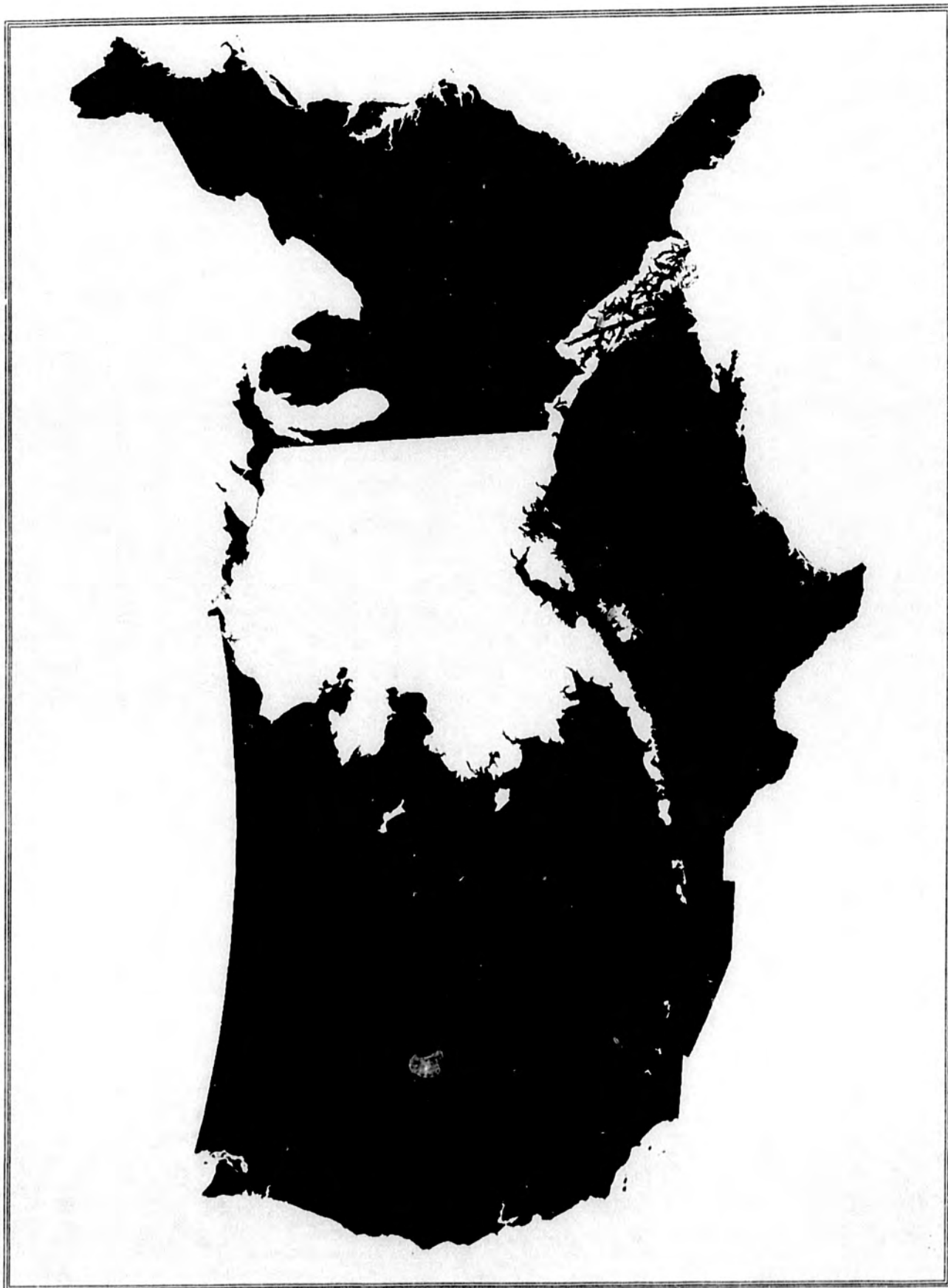
We recommend that the new administration look at the current policies and procedures and work with the contractors to make changes that pertain to the VPSO program. We encourage this Task Force to consider making funds available to:

- fund indirect as negotiated in Indirect Cost Agreements;
- adequately fund VPSO's and Director's salaries,
- fund office space and holding cells leases for VPSO's;
- develop recruiting and retention materials;
- station VPSO's in on road communities; and
- place more than 1 VPSO in large communities.

We also recommend that the Department of Law be included when negotiating changes to the VPSO contractual agreements. We also recommend that the State consider moving management of VPSO contracts to DCCED but retain the tri-party agreement between the regional non-profit, AST and the city or tribe.

Holt's
Taher
Fred
Loretha

Thank you for your time and consideration and we believe with these changes, law enforcement and the VPSO program can be greatly improved in Rural Alaska.



RECOMMENDATIONS AND STUDIES OF RURAL JUSTICE IN ALASKA

- I. *Bush Justice*, Lloyd Weinreb, Harvard Law School, Sep. 1977.
 - a. **Constables:** A constable should visit every village at least once or twice a month, on a predictable schedule that enables persons to seek him out, and without a display of force. This is essential if the constable's presence is to be sought and accepted.
 - b. **Magistrates:** There is no need for the regular presence of a magistrate in each village. The title and office should be filled by whatever local custom dictates, and it should not be expected to retain much of its Anglo-American historical significance.
 - c. **Responsiveness:** Local troopers should increase the responsiveness of official action and make the increased responsiveness evident to villagers.
 - d. **Information:** An official copy of records from cases affecting a village should be posted in a public place in the village.
 - e. **Procedure:** Formal criminal procedures should be modified to account for the realities of criminal justice systems in rural areas.
 - f. **Bureaucracy:** The responsible agencies should develop a coordinated approach to bush justice, and it should include a regular mechanism for identifying soluble problems and solving them.
 - g. **Training:** A serious, carefully planned, and not too technical meeting for instruction and discussion should be held once or twice a year for at least one week.
 - h. **Alcohol:** The penalty for a large-scale commercial bootlegger should not be so light that it is a trivial cost of doing business.
 - i. **Overall Structure:** The economic and cultural diversity of villages suggests that Alaska should avoid "over-all" theories and solutions in favor of a serious and constant effort to improve bush justice and solve specific difficulties as they arise in concrete situations.
- II. *Alaska Village Police Training: An Assessment and Recommendations*, John Angell, Criminal Justice Center, University of Alaska, Dec. 1978.
 - a. **Stability:** Some means should be developed to stabilize the village police employment situation and reduce turnover.
 - b. **Cooperation:** Alaska should develop an economical village police training program that can eventually continue without LEAA support, possibly through cooperative efforts between police agencies and other agencies such as the Alaska Skill Center in Seward.
 - c. **Support:** The Alaska State Troopers should increase their support of the village police and be actively involved in any reorganization of village police training.
- III. *Alaska Village Justice: An Exploratory Study*, John Angell, Criminal Justice Center, University of Alaska, Feb. 1979.

- a. Cooperation: State level justice officials need to take a more active role in working directly and closely with rural Native communities to define and address rural problems related to public safety, deviant behavior, and justice.
- b. Support: The level of support and services should be increased, even if not justified by a per capita formula, to provide a set minimum level of policing services
- c. Traditional Methods: Troopers need better training on the traditional practices and social control methods of local people
- d. Social Control: Criminal justice systems serving rural communities should conduct an assessment of the social control practices of the Native communities and initiate changes to resolve conflicts between state and local practices
- e. Resources: A manual containing the federal and state constitutions and pertinent Alaska Statutes should be provided to the officials of each rural community

IV. *The Village Public Safety Officer Program: A Conceptual Design to Improve Law Enforcement and Public Safety in the Rural Areas of Alaska*, Alaska Department of Public Safety, March 1980.

- a. Duties: VPSOs should combine law enforcement with emergency medical, firefighting, search and rescue, water safety, and other duties
- b. Oversight: **One or two additional Troopers should be stationed in each regional center to conduct ongoing training and support for VPSOs**
- c. Training: **Training should consist of six weeks of formal training followed by monthly contacts to each village by the Troopers for additional training and support.**
- d. Traditional Methods: The VPSO should be able to utilize local mechanisms for dispute resolution without entering the formal processing of the State's criminal justice system.
- e. Program advantages: minimal cost, direct economic and employment benefit to rural Alaska, increase in local control and self-determination, minimal increase in state bureaucracy, development of a career ladder for Alaska Natives in the public safety field eventually leading to the State Troopers, and decrease in loss of life and property in villages.

V. *Village Public Safety Officer Program: First Annual Evaluation*, John A. Sellin, 1981.

- a. Support: Additional administrative support staff should be added and troopers should maintain levels of service while supporting expanding commitments to the VPSO program
- b. Training:
 - i. Oversight troopers should be given instructional support and on-going refresher training