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## The Nonenforcement Role of the VPSO

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A recently completed Justice Center study of villages in the Bristol Bay region indicates that much of the work of Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs) involves incidents unrelated to crime, thus reinforcing the need for VPSO training in a broad spectrum of public safety services. The following article provides an overview of Alaska rural public safety programs and presents the results of the recent study.

While the state of Alaska attempts under its constitution to provide a comprehensive, centralized system for public safety and justice to all its residents, villages of rural Alaska offer a formidable challenge to any effort to provide public services. Difficulty of access makes providing public services to the remote areas of Alaska an expensive and time consuming venture. The more than 200 villages, which primarily exhibit a subsistence lifestyle, lack the tax bases required to provide for their own community and public safety services.

Since the mid-1960s two rural

justice programs have been developed by the Alaska State Troopers (AST) in an effort to meet the unique public safety needs of rural Alaskan communities: the Village Police Officer Program and the Village Public Safety Officer Program.

### Village Police Officer Program

The Village Police Officer (VPO) Program was initiated, with funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to provide law enforcement services to rural communities. However, when the program was implemented village police officers found that they were frequently called upon to perform various other public safety tasks and that their duties were not necessarily confined to law enforcement.

As Village Police Officers assumed their duties they became overwhelmed with the responsibility of providing the entire spectrum of public services to their respective villages, with the result that the program began to erode, and the Village Police Officer Program was replaced by the Village Public Safety Officer Program. (Not all Alaskan villages elected to replace their VPOs with VPSOs and some villages are still served exclusively by VPOs. In addition, many villages have retained a VPO position which functions in conjunction with the VPSO.)

### Village Public Safety Officer Program

According to a report prepared in 1979 (Messick, "Village Safety Officer Program," *Alaska Justice Forum*, Vol. 3, No. 6), in 1979 rural

Alaska had the distinction of having the worst record for public safety of any of the 50 states. It had the highest per capita loss of life and property due to accidental fires in the western hemisphere, suffered the highest per capita loss of life due to boating and water-related accidents of any state and was one of the most isolated areas of the country for obtaining emergency medical and law enforcement assistance. Rural Alaska led the state, and possibly the country, in the number of search and rescue missions and had the fewest local government resources to deal with total public safety problems. The Department of Public Safety recognized that there was a need for a wider range of public safety services in the villages than was then provided by the Village Police Officer Program.

This realization, coupled with the decline of the Village Police Officer Program, led to a proposal for a new public safety program tailored specifically for bush Alaska—the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program. This program provided state funding for Alaska Native villages to hire their own public safety officers, who would assist the Troopers in handling public safety related problems. The Department of Public Safety exercises oversight for the VPSO program. The concept of the VPSO program was to train an officer in five public safety areas: fire suppression, law enforcement, search and rescue, water safety and emergency medical services. It was thought that this type of training would provide the VPSO with the rudimentary tools required to handle most incidents which are serious

### HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- The Bureau of Justice Statistics examines crime in the nation's schools (page 2).
- An examination of residents in an Anchorage community corrections center (page 4).
- A new update to the *Justice Data Base Directory* (page 7).
- The Alaska Sentencing Commission releases its second annual report (page 8).

*Please see VPSO, page 9*

## A BJS Report

## School Crime

## Recent BJS Reports

In addition to the report summarized in the accompanying article, the following recent studies and reports from the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available from the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit:

*"Recidivism of felons on probation, 1986-89," an examination of levels of compliance with court orders and recidivism by felons on probation, NCJ-134177.*

*"Sheriffs' Departments 1990," an examination of sworn and civilian personnel, hiring requirements, training, functions, expenditures and equipment within sheriffs' departments throughout the country, NCJ-133283.*

*"State and Local Police Departments, 1990," an examination of sworn and civilian personnel, hiring requirements, training, functions, expenditures and equipment within local police agencies throughout the country, NCJ-133284.*

*"Drugs and Jail Inmates, 1989," findings on drug use patterns and criminal histories from national surveys of jail inmates in 1983 and 1989, NCJ-130836.*

*"Criminal Victimization 1990," a report detailing patterns of victimization as revealed by the National Crime Victimization Survey, NCJ-130234.*

*"Probation and Parole 1990," the results of an annual examination of parole and probation populations, NCJ-125833.*

An estimated 9 per cent of students, ages 12 to 19, were crime victims in or around their school over a six month period: two per cent reported experiencing one or more violent crime and 7 per cent reported at least one property crime. Violent crime is largely composed of simple assaults. These crimes involve attacks without weapons and may result in minor injury, such as cuts or bruises. Violent crimes can also include aggravated assaults, robberies and rapes.

These findings are based on a nationally representative sample survey of more than 10,000 youth who were interviewed from January through June of 1989 and who attended school at any time during the six months before the interview. The School Crime Supplement (SCS) was conducted as an enhancement of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), an ongoing household survey that gathers information on the victimization of household members age twelve or older. The

**Table 1. Students Reporting at Least One Victimization at School, By Personal and Family Characteristics**

Student characteristic	Total number of students	Per cent of students reporting victimization at school		
		Violent	Property	TOTAL
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	11,166,316	2	7	9
Female	10,387,776	2	8	9
<b>Race</b>				
White	17,306,626	2	7	9
Black	3,449,488	2	7	8
Other	797,978	2*	8	10
<b>Hispanic origin</b>				
Hispanic	2,026,968	3	5	7
Non-Hispanic	19,452,697	2	8	9
Not ascertained	74,428	-	3*	3*
<b>Age</b>				
12	3,220,891	2	7	9
13	3,318,714	2	8	10
14	3,264,574	2	9	11
15	3,214,109	3	7	9
16	3,275,002	2	7	9
17	3,273,628	1	7	8
18	1,755,825	1*	4	5
19	231,348	-	2*	2*
<b>Number of times family moved in last 5 years</b>				
None	18,905,538	2	7	8
Once	845,345	2*	7	9
Twice	610,312	3*	11	13
3 times or more	1,141,555	6	9	15
Not ascertained	51,343	5*	-	5*
<b>Family income</b>				
Less than \$7,500	2,041,418	2	6	8
\$ 7,500-\$ 9,999	791,086	1*	3	4
\$10,000-\$14,999	1,823,150	3	7	9
\$15,000-\$24,999	3,772,445	1	8	8
\$25,000-\$29,999	1,845,313	2	7	8
\$30,000-\$44,999	5,798,448	2	8	10
\$50,000 and over	3,498,382	2	9	11
Not ascertained	1,983,849	3	5	7
<b>Place of residence</b>				
Central city	5,816,321	2	8	10
Suburbs	10,089,207	2	7	9
Nonmetropolitan area	5,648,564	1	7	8

\* Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases.  
- Less than 0.5%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

**Table 2. Availability of Drugs or Alcohol at School, By Type of Drug**

Drug or alcohol at school	Per cent of students reporting that obtaining a drug or alcohol at school was:					TOTAL
	Easy	Hard	Impossible	Not known	Drug not known	
Alcohol	31	31	16	22	1	100
Marijuana	30	27	16	25	1	100
Cocaine	11	33	25	31	1	100
Crack cocaine	9	29	28	32	2	100
Uppers/downers	20	26	17	31	5	100
Other drugs	14	27	19	37	3	100

Detail may not add to 100% because of rounding.  
The total number of students represented is 21,554,092.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

survey asks only about crimes that have occurred during the six months before the interview.

Other findings from the SCS include the following:

- Victimization by violent crime at school had no consistent relationship to income levels of the victims' families. For property crime, however, students in families with annual incomes of \$50,000 or more were more likely to be victimized than were students whose families earned less than \$10,000 a year.

**Drugs and Alcohol**

- In the first half of 1989 about 30 per cent of the students interviewed believed that marijuana was easy to obtain at school. In comparison, 9 per cent said crack was easy to obtain, and 11 per cent claimed cocaine to be readily available.

- Overall, students most frequently reported that drugs of any type were hard or impossible to obtain at school. Approximately 58 per cent of students said cocaine and crack were hard or impossible to obtain at school.

- Students attending schools in which drugs were available were more likely than students in schools without drugs to indicate that their schools were taking some action to prevent drug use (91% versus 74%).

**Gangs and Attacks on Teachers**

- Seventy-nine per cent of students said no gangs existed at their schools; 15 per cent reported gangs, while another 5 per cent were not sure whether gangs existed at their schools.

- Of those students who said there were or could be gangs at their

school, 37 per cent reported that the gang members never fought at school. An additional 19 per cent claimed that gang members fought once or twice a year, while 12 per cent said that members fought once or twice a week, or even every day.

- Sixteen per cent of respondents claimed that a student had attacked or threatened a teacher at their school in the six months before the interview. Nearly three-fourths said no attacks or threats against teachers had occurred at their schools, and an additional 11 per cent did not know.

- Victims of violent crimes were about 3 times as likely as nonvictims to report they were afraid of being attacked at school (53% versus 19%). The overwhelming majority of students who had not been victimized reported no fear of attack, either at school (81%) or on the way to and from school (87%).

**Weapons**

- Two per cent of students had taken something to school to protect themselves from attack or harm at least once during a six month period. Objects for protection could have included weapons like a gun, knife or brass knuckles or things that could be used as weapons—razor blades, spiked jewelry and other objects capable of hurting an assailant.

**Table 3. Students Reporting Gangs at School and Attacks on Teachers**

	Total number of students	Per cent of students reporting:
<b>Street gangs at school</b>		
Present	3,300,826	15
Not present	17,041,519	79
Not known or not ascertained	1,211,747	5
<b>Frequency of fights between gang members*</b>		
Never	1,678,041	37
Once or twice a year	843,607	19
Once or twice a month	743,649	16
Once or twice a week	337,868	7
Almost every day	219,516	5
Not ascertained	689,894	15
<b>Attacks or threats on teachers</b>		
Yes	3,468,631	16
No	15,639,976	73
Not known or not ascertained	2,445,485	11

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

\* Excludes cases in which the student indicated there were no gangs at school.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

- Students in central cities (3%) were more likely than those in the suburbs (2%) to report taking to school something that could be used as a weapon; students in nonmetropolitan areas (1%) were the least likely to arm themselves with objects for protection. Males (3%) were slightly more likely than females (1%) to take such objects to school.

*This article was based on the Bureau of Justice Statistics study "School Crime: A National Crime Victimization Survey Report," NCJ-131645. Copies of the entire report are available through the Alaska Statistical Analysis Unit of the Justice Center.*

**Table 4. Victimization of Students, By Gang Presence at School**

Gangs were:	Total number of students	Per cent of students reporting victimization		
		Violent	Property	TOTAL
Present	3,300,826	3	9	12
Not present	17,041,519	2	7	8
Not known	1,211,747	2	7	8

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

## Alaska Community Corrections Residents

*N.E. Schafer and Michael P. Tubbs*

The Justice Center recently conducted an analysis of offenders in residence at a community corrections center in Anchorage. The research, which was carried out for Allvest, Incorporated, sought to identify those offender characteristics which might be associated with successful completion of the reintegration program.

The forerunner of today's residential community corrections center was the halfway house, which provided a transition period between imprisonment and freedom for newly released prisoners. Although such facilities existed in this country as early as the mid-19th century, primarily under the aegis of religious groups, the concept of reintegrating the offender was not widely accepted until 100 years later, when corrections professionals recognized that their duty to protect the public from the activities of convicted felons might not end at the prison gate. Traditionally, American prisoners had been released, sometimes with \$25 "gate money," at the end of their sentences. It was not the concern of prison officials how these released felons got from the prison to their home communities, whether they got jobs, or how they lived until their first paychecks.

In the 1950s and 1960s the importance of a pre-release transition period was widely recognized and the number of halfway houses greatly increased throughout the county. Most programs required that residents be employed, pay room and board, contribute to the support of dependents, and save a portion of their wages. Residents were permitted more and more access to the community as they demonstrated their ability to handle this access responsibly. They were provided with the means to succeed without resorting to crime when they reached the end of their sentences.

Soon halfway houses were called upon to provide services to offenders other than those in pre-release status. Some were "halfway-in" houses whose residents were probationers needing more control than traditional probation supervision could

provide but less than imprisonment imposed. Program services were also extended to pretrial offenders and to offenders in diversion programs. Because the term *halfway house* is so closely associated with, and so descriptive of, pre-release programs, many multi-purpose facilities now are called by the more generic term *community corrections center*.

The Cordova Center is a 90-bed facility in Anchorage, which opened in 1986 as a traditional reintegration program. The center quickly became a multi-purpose facility, and it now serves detained misdemeanants "furloughed" from the local jail to complete short sentences doing supervised community service, probationers who have never been incarcerated, probationers released from prison on "split" sentences (e.g., five years in prison, three on probation), prisoners furloughed from the institution prior to their release date, and parolees or probationers who require more restraint than field supervision can provide. Furloughed prisoners may apply for center residence or may be placed there by the Department of Corrections under a prison crowding policy. Those placed by the department are usually within six months of their release date. By mid-1991 more than 3500 people had been in residence in the Cordova Center. The vast majority of these had been in residence for short periods—usually detained misdemeanants assigned to a week or two of community service.

For our study of Cordova Center residents we excluded detained misdemeanants because they did not participate in the center's programs. All other residents who had been terminated from the center between January 1989 and July 1991 were subjects for this study, which was begun in the summer of 1991. Center staff had estimated that the 1.5-year time frame would yield as many as 400 cases but, in fact, the sample was only 297 people.

Client data are presented in three groups: demographic characteristics, legal characteristics and programmatic characteristics. The demographic characteristics are

presented in Table 1. Age was computed by subtracting date of birth from date of entry into the center. The mean age was 33.65 years (median 33.0), a bit higher than the average age of the incarcerated population; the range was 19 to 74. Center clients were overwhelmingly male (84.2%). Slightly more than two-thirds were white (67.2%), with black and Native

**Table 1. Resident Profiles:  
Demographic Characteristics**

AGE	N	%
Less than 21	10	3.4
22-25	41	13.8
26-30	62	20.9
31-35	81	27.3
36-40	52	17.5
41-50	39	13.1
Over 50	12	4.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>SEX</b>		
Male	250	84.2
Female	47	15.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>RACE</b>		
White	199	67.2
Alaska Native	36	12.2
Black	49	16.6
Hispanic	6	2.0
Other	6	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
No high school	108	36.4
G.E.D.	60	20.2
High school graduate	74	24.9
Some college	51	17.2
4 or more years college	4	1.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
Single	141	48.1
Married	67	22.9
Divorced/separated	72	24.6
Widowed	13	4.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS</b>		
None	149	50.2
One	52	17.5
Two	57	19.2
Three	26	8.8
Four or more	13	4.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO ENTRY</b>		
Yes	85	29.0
No	208	71.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>100.0</b>

residents comprising 16.6 per cent and 12.2 per cent of the total. These racial characteristics do not at all reflect the demographic profile of the Alaska prison population, which for both FY1987 and FY1988 was 54 per cent white, 34 per cent Alaska Native, 9 per cent black, 2 per cent Hispanic, and 1 per cent Asian/Pacific Islander.

Many of the residents (36.4%) were not high school graduates. Together, high school graduates and recipients of General Education Diplomas were 45.1 per cent of all subjects. Only four clients had four-year degrees while 51 (17.2%) had completed some college work.

Most residents were single (48.1%), while the second largest group was divorced or separated. Almost 23 per cent were married at the time of residence. Because support of dependents is one of the goals of the employment requirement in the community corrections center we also looked at the number of dependents. Approximately half the residents had none, while 17.5 per cent had one and 19.2 per cent

had two. A very small proportion had four or more (4.3%).

The legal characteristics of the residents (Table 2) include status (furlough, probation or parole), prior record and instant offense. Nearly two-thirds of the sample were furloughees; parolees comprised the smallest proportion (11.1%). More residents had committed crimes against persons than any other category of crime. Offenses were collapsed into four categories: personal, property, drug and "other." The "other" category included crimes against the public order, traffic offenses, and some "white collar" crimes (e.g., fraud, forgery).

Thirty per cent of the residents were first offenders (i.e., had no prior record). Almost as many (29.6%) had had four or more prior arrests. The remainder (40.4%) had been arrested one to three times prior to the commission of the instant offense.

Length of time served was computed in months using the program entry date and subtracting sentencing date. The mean sentence time served by all persons in the sample was 24.54 months, or slightly more than two years, but the range was one month to more than eight years (96 months). Mean time served was compared with other variables. In a comparison by status probationers served a mean time of 7.74 months (less than one year); furloughees, 25.73 months (more than two years); and parolees, 39.24 months (more than three years). The mean time served by females was considerably less than that served by males in the program—15.67 months compared to 24.08 months. The mean time served by Alaska Natives was longer than that for either whites or blacks—26.36 months compared to 22.75 for whites and 19.73 for blacks.

The residents were also profiled according to programmatic characteristics (Table 3). Each resident had a contract which might involve paying restitution, seeking employment, attending school, or a combination of these. The coding was not entirely accurate vis-a-vis combinations, since the files were not always clear; i.e., the contract read "seek employment" but restitution was mentioned elsewhere in the file. A very small proportion of residents

attended school as part of their contract (6.1%) and we identified only 15.5 per cent (N=46) who were required to pay restitution. It may be that since the majority of residents had served prison time, restitution was not part of the original sentence. Clearly the primary requirement overall was to seek employment.

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STATUS	N	%
Furlough	194	65.3
Probation	70	23.6
Parole	33	11.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

TYPE OF CRIME		
Personal	126	42.4
Property	78	26.3
Drug	53	17.8
Other	40	13.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

PRIOR RECORD: NUMBER OF ARRESTS		
None	89	30.0
One	48	16.2
Two	42	14.1
Three	30	10.1
Four	30	10.1
Five or more	58	19.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

MEAN SENTENCE TIME SERVED		
Status	Months	
Furlough	25.73	
Probation	7.74	
Parole	39.24	
Sex		
Male	24.08	
Female	15.67	
Race		
White	22.75	
Alaska Native	26.36	
Black	19.73	

CONTRACT	N	%
Pay restitution	46	15.5
Employment	224	75.4
Attend school	18	6.1
Combination	9	3.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

NUMBER OF JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES		
None	77	15.5
1-5	122	75.4
6-10	51	6.1
11-19	24	6.1
20 or more	23	3.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

NUMBER OF INFRACTIONS		
None	228	76.8
One	52	17.5
Two	12	4.0
Three or more	5	1.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

OUTCOME		
Satisfactory completion	221	74.4
Escape/walkaway	25	8.4
Removed	21	7.1
Administrative removal	30	10.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

ALCOHOL TREATMENT STATUS		
Not required	68	22.9
Ongoing	12	4.0
Complete	168	56.6
Failure	49	16.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

DRUG TREATMENT STATUS		
Not required	86	29.0
Ongoing	12	4.0
Complete	153	51.5
Failure	46	15.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

LENGTH OF STAY IN MONTHS		
Less than one	36	12.1
One to two	74	24.9
Two to three	72	24.2
Three to four	42	14.1
Four to five	18	6.1
Five to six	15	5.1
More than six	40	13.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Cordova Center**  
(continued from page 5)

Because the study period covered a weak period in the state's economy, and because it is axiomatic that offenders have difficulty finding jobs, we attempted to measure the effort made by residents to find employment by counting the number of employment-related activities. Since residents had to indicate where they would be at all times when they checked out of the center, it was possible to count the number of trips for each resident who signed out to make applications or to attend job interviews. A substantial number (N=77) had no interviews in their files either because they had jobs prior to entry or because they were required to attend school. Of the remainder, 23 residents signed out for at least twenty employment-seeking activities, but most checked out for five or less before finding a job (N=122). Fifty-one residents reported 6 to 10 employment efforts, and 24 signed out for 11 to 19 job-hunting-related excursions. Although some job seekers left the program (either voluntarily or involuntarily) before finding a job,

employment opportunities seem to have been available for those residents who put some effort into finding them.

In order to assess adjustment to halfway house residence, the number of infractions in the first month of residence was counted and is included in Table 3. Most residents had no infractions (76.8%) and only 5.7 per cent had more than one.

Because alcohol and drug abuse were substantial problems among residents, programs related to substance abuse were stressed at the center. Nearly three-fourths of the 229 residents who were required to attend alcohol counseling during their stay satisfactorily completed the center-required treatment. Forty-nine (21.4%) of those undergoing treatment failed and a small number were still in treatment upon termination from the program.

The amount of time residents spent in the Cordova Center program was another factor considered in assessing program completion. Length of stay was coded in days and recoded into thirty-day months. More than a third of our sample (37.0%) were in residence for less than two months and almost

two-thirds (61.2%) were in residence for three months or less. Twenty-five per cent were in residence for three to six months, and 13.5 per cent for more than six months.

Table 4 provides comparisons of outcome with other social and legal variables. Residents who left through administrative removal have been deleted from the tables, leaving a total sample of 267 residents.

Residents who were able to continue working in a job which they held at entry were more likely to succeed than those who were unemployed at entry. Ninety per cent of those with jobs successfully completed the Cordova Center program, while 80 per cent of the unemployed succeeded.

Furloughees and parolees had a higher rate of program completion than probationers. It may be that adjustment to halfway house residence is easier for those who have made an adjustment to prison than for those who have not experienced a period of confinement.

Prior record as measured by arrest history does not appear to be particularly indicative of success. While 85.5 per cent of residents with no prior records (N=83) successfully completed the program so did 81.5 per cent of residents who did have prior records (N=184).

Success and failure are also compared in Table 4 by instant offense, i.e., the type of crime for which Cordova Center residence was part of the sentence. The highest rate of program success was for persons convicted of crimes against persons (90.5%) followed by drug-related offenses (84.8%). Conventional wisdom suggests that offenders involved in drug abuse are more difficult to rehabilitate, but that does not appear to have been the case with this sample.

Length of stay by program completion is also presented in Table 4. It is clear that residents who fail do so very early in their tenure. Thirty-nine per cent of the failures failed in their first month of residence; 67.4 per cent failed in the first two months. Four residents failed after spending five or more months in the program: two walked away and two were removed for cause. Since failure is, by definition, termination from the program, the tables for length of stay are skewed

**Table 4. Comparison of Program Success with Program Failure**

N=267

Administrative removals are not included.

SEX	Success		Failure		TYPE OF CRIME	Success		Failure	
	N	%	N	%		N	%	N	%
Male	187	83.5	37	16.5	Person	105	90.5	11	9.5
Female	34	79.1	9	20.9	Property	50	70.4	21	29.6
<b>RACE</b>					Drugs	39	84.8	7	15.2
White	154	85.5	26	14.5	Other	27	79.4	7	20.6
Alaska Native	28	84.8	5	15.2	<b>LENGTH OF STAY IN MONTHS</b>				
Black	30	69.8	13	30.2	Less than one	8	30.8	18	69.2
Other	9	81.8	2	18.2	One to two	51	79.7	13	20.3
<b>EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO ENTRY</b>					Two to three	57	89.1	7	11.0
Yes	67	90.5	7	9.5	Three to four	36	90.0	4	10.0
No	151	79.5	39	20.5	Four to five	18	100.0	—	—
<b>STATUS</b>					Five to six	13	86.7	2	13.4
Furlough	154	86.5	24	13.5	More than six	38	95.0	2	5.0
Probation	44	71.0	18	29.0	<b>NUMBER OF INFRACTIONS</b>				
Parole	23	85.2	4	14.8	None	196	90.7	20	9.3
<b>PRIOR RECORD: NUMBER OF ARRESTS</b>					One	15	39.5	23	60.5
None	71	85.5	12	14.5	Two	7	77.7	2	22.2
One	37	90.2	4	9.8	Three	1	100.0	—	—
Two	30	75.0	10	25.0	Four	1	100.0	—	—
Three or more	83	80.6	20	19.4	Five or more	1	50.0	1	50.0

Total success rate, 82.8% (N=221); total failure rate, 17.2% (N=46).

by the failures. It is obvious, however, that adjustment in the first month of residence is crucial to satisfactory completion of the program.

The number of infractions in the file for the first month of residence holds some interest. Nearly 91 per cent of those with no infractions were successful while only 39.5 per cent of those with one infraction were successful. In other words, more than half (56.5%) of the clients who failed to complete the program had violated the rules in the first month of residence, while only 11.3 per cent of those who successfully completed the program had any infractions in their files. This is further indication that adjustment in the first month is crucial to program success.

The success or failure of the clients in this study has been measured in terms of program completion. This is not a particularly good measure of the effectiveness of the center's program, especially since a substantial number of the clients (37%) were in residence for no more than sixty days.

However, the information available about the clients does provide some items of interest. The low percentage of Alaska Natives in the sample (12.2%) in conjunction with their rather high rate of program success suggests that Native prisoners are less likely than other racial groups to apply for community center placement but are good candidates for such placements. It may be that Anchorage is not viewed as a desirable location by Native offenders. If such placement were available in a bush community more Alaska Natives might apply for halfway house placement.

The reverse is probably true of black prisoners, for whom Anchorage is a desirable location, making them likely to apply for placement. Certainly the proportion of Cordova Center residents who are black (16.6%) is proportionally much higher than their representation in either the Alaska offender population or in the population at large. However, their failure rate as Center residents is higher than that of either whites or Alaska Natives.

The relationship of education level to program success or failure mirrors the findings of other studies—47.8 per cent of the program failures had

not completed high school. Because education appears to have an impact on employment and salary, Cordova Center residents without high school diplomas might be directed to G.E.D. preparation programs in the community.

The composition of the sample vis-a-vis several legal characteristics was also of interest. The bulk of the residents were on furlough from Alaska correctional institutions (65.3%); the smallest group was on parole. Only 30 per cent of the sample were first offenders, while 39.7 per cent had had at least three prior convictions. More residents had been convicted of crimes against persons (42.4%) than of any other type of crime. These "violent" offenders successfully completed the program at a much higher rate (90.5%) than property offenders (70.4%), and those with prior records were almost as successful as those without (81.5% compared with 85.5%).

The overall success rate of 74.4 per cent might be related to the generally short length of stay, since refraining from criminal activity for

two or three months is perhaps easier than for longer periods. Since 61.2 per cent of the clients were in the program for 90 days or fewer (N=182), and of these 63.7 per cent (N=116) successfully completed the program, it would be of interest to know if any of the 116 were subsequently rearrested. Program completion is not a widely accepted measure of program effectiveness; a better one is whether the offender remains crime-free after release. Recidivism, therefore, would provide a better means of assessing program effectiveness than any of the variables in the current data set.

In general, the data suggest that the community corrections center is effective in providing a transition period between incarceration and release. The program requirements provide opportunities for residents to develop and practice skills which will help them to remain crime-free after release.

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## Data Base Directory Update Available

The Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage has released another expanded version of the Justice Data Base Directory, a research catalogue of data banks maintained by Alaska justice system agencies. The directory describes each data base in detail and provides summary background information on the controlling agencies. Originally published in 1988, the work has been expanded three times. It represents the first effort in the country to collect such information on a statewide basis.

The directory now includes information on databases held by:

- Alaska Court System
- Alaska Department of Law
- Alaska Department of Public Safety
- Alaska Department of Corrections
- Division of Family and Youth Services
- Alaska Bar Association
- Alaska Judicial Council
- Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit
- Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Alaska Office of Equal Employment Opportunity
- Office of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
- Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Epidemiology Section of the Division of Public Health
- Violent Crimes Compensation Board
- Alaska Police Standards Council
- Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
- Alaska Office of the Ombudsman
- State Archives and Records Management Service
- Legislative Research Agency
- Legislative Affairs Agency
- Alaska Commission for Human Rights
- Parole Board, Alaska Department of Corrections

Copies of the *Justice Data Base Directory* may be obtained through the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

## Sentencing Commission Releases Second Annual Report

*Lisa Rieger*

According to its *1991 Annual Report*, the Alaska Sentencing Commission considered several policy issues related to the sentencing structure: 1) the possibility of restructuring the state sentencing system; 2) the terms and conditions of probation and parole; 3) treatment alternatives and rehabilitation as sentencing goals; 4) use of intermediate sanctions and program options; and 5) the need for a comprehensive criminal justice base.

The Commission operates from a broad-based policy perspective, taking into consideration the divergent attitudes of each of the departments responsible for the administration of justice. The freedom to analyze sentencing issues using information from experts and other states which have undertaken sentencing reform permits the Commission to make recommendations which are considered and not merely responsive to recent highly publicized events. The perspective of the Commission may forestall a future need for reform of reforms.

### Restructuring the Sentencing System

The Commission made no recommendations with regard to restructuring the sentencing system. It analyzed 174 offenses listed in the Alaska codes and their presumptive sentences according to seriousness, level of offense and typical sentence and compared its findings with the handling of similar offenses in other states. Although the Commission discovered some disagreement between its ranking of seriousness and the current level of offense, the Commission did not recommend any reclassifications or changes in sentences. However, the possibility of reclassifying or changing the definition of statutory rape and of changing the sentences for minor drug offenses will be discussed further in 1992.

In several states and under the federal sentencing system, where sentencing reform has been implemented, elaborate grid systems have been devised to accommodate differences in criminal history and

offender characteristics so that the punishment is tailored both to the crime and the criminal. For example, Alaska's grid system contains 20 ranges for felonies in comparison to 60 in Minnesota, 99 in Oregon and 135 in Washington state. However, the Commission did not recommend the adoption of a more complex grid system in Alaska, in part because of the investment already made in the current system. The Commission felt that few problems have surfaced in Alaska, in spite of the greater degree of flexibility given to judges in the state.

### Probation and Parole

The Commission made two recommendations with regard to probation and parole issues. First, it recommended legislation to expand immunity from liability for the state and state employees in the release and supervision of persons in state custody who are on parole, probation, furlough, work release, or under similar conditions of release. The Commission recognized that difficulties with probation and parole supervision, especially in remote villages, currently often dictates potentially inappropriate release decisions, such as releasing someone to a "hub," rather than the village of residence. (However, the Commission did not give its support to SB 214, which concerns this issue, noting that legislation on this subject was "a complicated matter, involving a number of technical legal questions with the commission has not addressed.")

The Commission also recommended that the Alaska Rules of Court be revised to give priority to probation revocation proceedings. The Commission believes this will ameliorate current problems of delay for offenders entering needed rehabilitation programs and in disposing of probationer problems.

Three additional probation-parole issues were specifically designated for further study in 1992:

1. Should mandatory parole terms be lengthened?
2. Should discretionary parole release be available to any presumptively sentenced offenders?

3. Should the maximum term of available probation be lengthened from five to ten years?

### Rehabilitation as a Sentencing Goal

The Commission evaluated treatment alternatives for certain offenders, identifying sex offenders and substance abusers in particular as individuals for whom the twin constitutional goals of rehabilitation and protection of the public often go hand in hand. In these categories the potential for reoffending against the same victims—family and friends—are great. Without treatment many offenders in these categories would reoffend after release, rehabilitation has value "not only for the offender, but also for the good of the victim and for society as a whole."

The Commission made a series of recommendations with regard to rehabilitation, supporting rehabilitation as a goal of sentencing and imprisonment, and emphasizing that rehabilitation programs must be carefully and rigorously evaluated to determine their efficacy and viability. Finally, the Commission pointed out that such programs are only one part of a crime prevention effort, which must be undertaken by the entire community as well as by the criminal justice system.

### Use of Intermediate Sanctions and Program Options

The costs associated with long term imprisonment for those convicted of serious felonies and the costs and risks of the same offenders committing more offenses if they are not incarcerated have formed the framework of a national debate. The Sentencing Commission is collecting national studies of this issue and will continue to address cost issues during the coming year. Although intermediate sanctions do not cost as much as imprisonment, they still require significant expenditures if they are to be successful. The Commission has undertaken a project with the National Institute of Corrections and the State Justice Institute to assess the state's needs and problems in this area.



Several different intermediate sanctions and program options are currently utilized in varying degrees in Alaska. They include: monetary options, such as fines, forfeiture and restitution; offender monitoring and restrictions on liberty, such as electronic monitoring, intensive supervision, and halfway houses; and shock value options, such as short periods of incarceration designed to dissuade the new offender from committing future offenses. The Commission recommended that the Department of Corrections expand its use of intermediate sanctions and that the judiciary be encouraged to use intermediate sanctions more extensively for felonies and misdemeanors, as well as for probation and parole violations. In particular, the Commission recommended that the intermediate sanction imposed for probation and parole violations match the nature of the violation (e.g., for dirty drug tests, a substance abuse program, and for curfew violations, restrictive programs such as electronic monitoring).

### A Comprehensive Criminal Justice Data Base

The Sentencing Commission in 1991 addressed its own need for reliable data by beginning to

### VPSO (continued from page 1)

threats to life and property in the bush.

Currently, all Village Public Safety Officer recruits must pass a six-week resident training course held at the Department of Public Safety Academy in Sitka, Alaska. The basic VPSO course includes training in emergency trauma and treatment, procedural law, search and rescue, water safety, and arrest. Participants must also complete a required physical fitness program. New recruits subsequently must pass a two-week firefighting course held in Anchorage. In addition, each VPSO is required to attend advanced fire training. Regional training, in one week increments, is also mandatory for VPSOs unless excused by the department training coordinator. Once the trained VPSO returns to his village he is assigned an "Oversight Trooper" (a commissioned

assemble a data base based on information from the three primary computer systems—OBSCIS (Department of Corrections), PROMIS (Department of Law) and APSIN (Department of Public Safety). (The court data system is not centralized and cannot produce much aggregate information.) The Commission recognizes that the criminal justice data problem presents a serious impediment to rational decision-making on criminal justice management in Alaska. Currently, it is difficult, if not impossible, to decide the effectiveness of one sanction over another because existing records are incomplete or fragmented. Therefore, average sentences, amount of time served and recidivism rates cannot be assessed.

The Sentencing Commission's work highlights the importance of bringing together a representative group of persons responsible for the administration of justice in Alaska to consider the difficult and complicated issues related to sentencing reform. Changes in sentencing legislation must take into account the manystresses society imposes on the criminal justice system; the product of the Sentencing Commission can advance that reform.

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Alaska State Trooper) to act as mentor and to provide technical assistance and on-the-job training. In high risk or complex situations, the VPSO stays in communication with the oversight trooper and takes immediate action as prescribed by the trooper to keep the situation under control until the trooper arrives. Oversight visits are made by the trooper approximately once every two months. During the visits the trooper provides on-the-job training in criminal investigation, fire safety, and other areas in which the VPSO may be having problems.

### Justice Center Study

In spring 1991 the Justice Center undertook a study of the role of the Village Public Safety Officer to evaluate incidents, both criminal and noncriminal, reported by the VPSOs of 13 Alaska villages to the Alaska State Troopers (AST) over a two year period (1989-1990). The data



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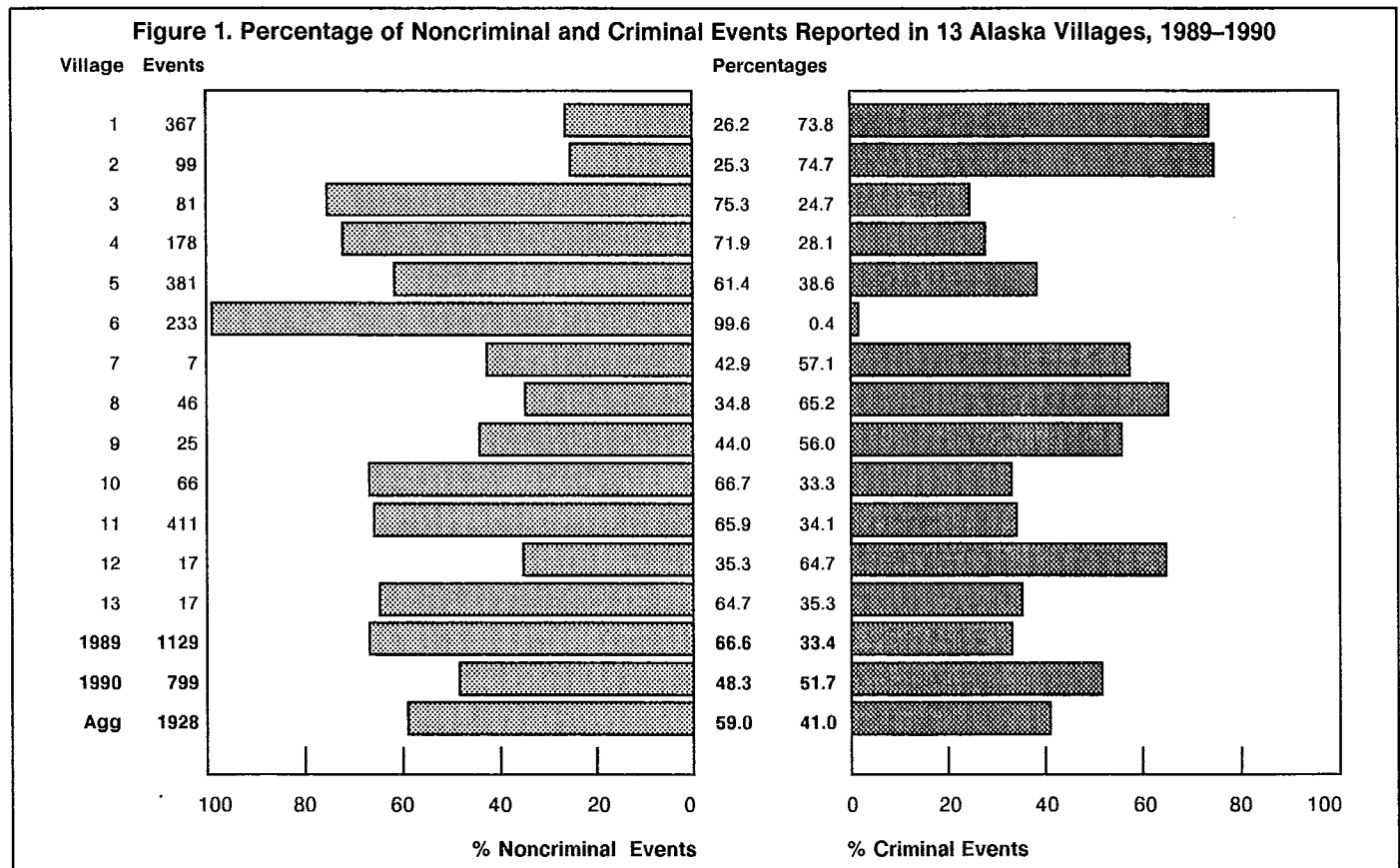
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were gathered from the Alaska Department of Public Safety's computerized records system by an ad hoc program specifically created for this extraction. The program requested all cases reported for each of the villages for 1989 and 1990.

Each VPSO reports criminal and noncriminal activities in much the same way as an Alaska State Trooper does. The VPSO calls his trooper detachment, is issued a case number for an event and subsequently fills out a police report. The reports are then categorized by an AST activity code, processed and entered into the DPS data base. (The willingness or ability of a VPSO to obtain a case number and report an incident or offense is a major source of data gaps in bush justice research.

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**VPSO**

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Historically VPSOs have also been known to report only the most serious events to AST.)

Each event assigned a case number by AST in 1989 and 1990 was included in the data. The ad hoc program listed each village by name, case number, offense or incident code, date and time of occurrence and case status. If there were any questions, AST activity identification codes were used to separate criminal from noncriminal activity, and the data were treated accordingly. A brief description of each event was provided. Examples of noncriminal activities included death notifications, search and rescue requests, security checks, and drownings. Criminal events include alcohol offenses,

assaults, drug offenses and theft.

All 13 villages examined were in the Bristol Bay area and their public safety needs were provided directly by a VPSO. Village population ranged from 33 to 391 full-time residents.

The villages differ with regard to the role played by the VPSO. One village may require one area of emphasis, while another requires something entirely different. These findings, based on aggregate data, are not representative of all Alaska villages; however, they do provide a means to evaluate the general criminal and noncriminal activity of the Village Public Safety Officers.

The aggregate data indicate that for 1989 and 1990 a total of 1928 cases were reported by VPSOs in the 13 villages. Of these reported cases 1138 (59%) were noncriminal in

nature and the remaining 790 (41%) were classified as criminal events. In 1989 377 criminal cases were reported and, in 1990, 413. In 1989 752 noncriminal events were reported and, in 1990, 386. Figure 1 displays the percentages of criminal and noncriminal events for 1989, 1990, and the aggregate for both years. (Actual figures are found in Table 2).

The three most frequently reported noncriminal VPSO activities (N=335; see Table 1) were requests for patrol (10%; N=114), checks on security (9.8%; N=112) and checks on the welfare of villagers (9.6%; N=109). (These aggregate figures represent all 13 villages for both

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**Table 1. Three Most Frequently Reported Noncriminal Events in 13 Alaska Villages, 1989-1990**

1989	Number of events	Per cent of events	1990	Number of events	Per cent of events	Aggregate 1989-1990	Number of events	Per cent of events
Patrol request	105	14.0	Welfare check—person	38	9.8	Patrol request	114	10.0
Security check	97	12.9	Assist inside Alaska	33	8.5	Security check	112	9.8
Welfare check—person	71	9.4	Provide transportation	32	8.3	Welfare check—person	109	9.6
<b>Total, 3 most frequently reported</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>Total, 3 most frequently reported</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>Total, 3 most frequently reported</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>29.4</b>
<b>TOTAL, ALL NONCRIMINAL EVENTS</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>TOTAL, ALL NONCRIMINAL EVENTS</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>TOTAL, ALL NONCRIMINAL EVENTS</b>	<b>1138</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2. Reported Noncriminal Events in 13 Alaska Villages, 1989-1990**

Total population = 2477\*

Village and population* →														TOTALS			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	1989	1990	Agg	%
Activity ↓	613	385	94	160	178	42	33	77	181	105	391	66	152				
Patrol request	1	-	1	-	9	5	-	-	-	1	97	-	-	105	9	114	10.0
Security check	-	-	1	37	4	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	97	15	112	9.8
Welfare check—person	4	4	-	3	19	58	-	1	1	1	17	1	-	71	38	109	9.6
Assist inside Alaska	12	3	14	10	11	1	-	-	-	3	40	-	1	62	33	95	8.3
Fire services	2	-	-	6	15	33	-	-	-	3	6	-	-	46	19	65	5.7
Public appearance	1	2	1	9	21	4	-	2	-	11	13	-	-	44	19	63	5.5
Public assist	1	-	2	3	31	9	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	30	31	61	5.4
Subpoena/Summons served	12	2	-	7	9	-	-	3	1	6	15	-	3	31	27	58	5.1
Animal-related offense/complaint	4	-	4	3	31	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	25	47	4.1
Suspicious circumstances	5	2	3	4	15	1	1	-	-	2	7	1	1	19	23	42	3.7
Provide transportation	3	-	2	-	7	8	-	-	-	1	13	-	-	2	32	34	3.0
Medical assist	5	1	1	4	8	-	-	-	-	1	8	-	-	20	8	28	2.5
Transport prisoner	5	1	1	2	8	-	-	1	-	2	5	-	1	14	12	26	2.3
Inspection	5	3	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	3	4	2	-	4	20	24	2.1
Traffic control provided	-	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	-	21	1.8
Court appearance	5	1	2	1	8	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	11	9	20	1.8
Road conditions	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	15	1.3
Search and rescue	4	-	2	1	-	-	1	1	2	3	-	-	-	8	6	14	1.2
Water safety	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	2	14	1.2
Training	-	-	-	1	9	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	13	-	13	1.1
Arrest warrant served	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	3	-	1	6	7	13	1.1
Dirt bike, other ATV complaint	-	-	2	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	3	12	1.1
Minor in need of supervision	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	9	2	11	1.0
Civil problem	1	-	4	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	9	0.8
Medical transport	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	5	2	7	1.6
MVA—Injury	1	-	1	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	7	0.6
Death invest.—natural causes	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	5	1	6	0.5
Family offense—noncriminal	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	3	-	4	2	6	0.5
Lost/found property	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	4	2	6	0.5
Protective custody	-	-	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	2	6	0.5
Suicide	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	5	1	6	0.5
Domestic violence process served	-	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	5	0.4
Fire—non-arson—property damage	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	-	5	0.4
Motorist assist	-	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	5	0.4
MVA—property damage only	1	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	5	0.4
Overdue motorist	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	4	5	0.4
Transport mental	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	3	2	5	0.4
Accident—firearm—other	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3	4	0.4
Drugs—information	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	0.4
Aircraft accident—prop. damage	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	0.3
Dept of Public Safety recruitment	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	3	0.3
Emergency message	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	0.3
Overdue aircraft	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	0.3
Death notification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	0.2
Fall—fatal	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	2	0.2
Health/safety hazard	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	0.2
Locate	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	0.2
Missing person—adult	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	2	0.2
Road test/op. license applicant	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	0.2
Runaway juvenile	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	2	0.2
Vehicle inspection	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	0.2
Aircraft accident—fatal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	0.1
Attempted suicide	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.1
Bkground invest. for other agency	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	0.1
Fire—non-arson—residence	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.1
MVA—fatal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.1
MVA—prop. damage—non-traffic	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.1
Snowmachine complaint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	0.1
Watercraft accident—fatal	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.1
<b>TOTAL NONCRIMINAL EVENTS</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>1138</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>TOTAL CRIMINAL EVENTS</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>-</b>

\* Population from 1990 census figures.

**VPSO***(continued from page 10)*

1989 and 1990.) In 1989 these three types of events represented approximately 36.3 per cent of the VPSO noncriminal related activities.

In 1990 the noncriminal events reported dropped dramatically, by approximately one half—from 752 in 1989 to 386 in 1990. The three most frequently reported noncriminal service events in 1990 changed as well: checking on the welfare of villagers (9.8%; N=38), assistance to another justice agency, such as verifying the location of a probationer (8.5%; N=33) and providing transportation (8.3%; N=32). These three incident types accounted for approximately 26.7 per cent of noncriminal incidents in 1990.

There is no known reason for the dramatic decrease in reported noncriminal events from 1989 to 1990. However, of the five most frequently reported events in 1989 (patrol requests, security checks, welfare checks, assists inside Alaska and fire services), there were 267 more reported in 1989 than in 1990. The decrease in these five events alone accounts for approximately

three quarters of the difference between the two years.

According to a representative of the Alaska State Troopers, there have not been any policy changes or operational directives issued to VPSOs in any Alaska village in regards to reporting or classifying incidents that could account for the large fluctuation in the data. The AST spokesperson added that there has been little turnover among VPSOs in the Bristol Bay area and that he did not believe that unfamiliarity with AST reporting procedures could account for the decrease in reported events. Any attempt to explain the aberration based solely on two years' data would be purely speculative.

However, it is worth noting that the AST spokesperson also stated that there were approximately 14,000 noncriminal events reported statewide by all VPSOs in 1990. The three most frequently reported noncriminal events statewide were patrol requests, security checks and animal-related offenses and complaints.

The aggregate noncriminal service activities of the VPSOs in the 13 villages are ordered by rank in Table 2. Table 2 also indicates the number

of times each incident was reported to AST by one of the VPSOs in 1989 and 1990. Across the bottom of the table the aggregate number of noncriminal events for each village is reported and contrasted with the number of aggregate criminal events reported for each village in 1989 and 1990. As can be seen in Table 2, the number of noncriminal events reported declined significantly in 1990. However, the criminal events reported increased from 377 in 1989 to 413 in 1990 (approximately 10%). Since this was exploratory research it was not possible to tell if the decrease in noncriminal events and the increase in criminal events indicate a trend.

It is also unknown if this proportional division of VPSO activities is unique to the Bristol Bay area or if it also holds true for the rest of the state. This study indicates that more longitudinal research into the nonenforcement role of the Village Public Safety Officer is warranted and should be conducted on a much broader geographic base. *Larry Trostle is an assistant professor with the Justice Center; Darren McShea and Russell Perras are recent Justice graduates of University of Alaska Anchorage.*

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