



**TURNOVER AMONG ALASKA VILLAGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ATTRITION**

Darryl Wood, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The motto of Alaska's Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program is "Last Frontier, First Responders." For the sole public safety presence in a number of geographically isolated Alaska Native villages, this motto is fitting. These VPSOs can be seen as public safety "jacks-of-all-trades." They are responsible for a number of tasks including law enforcement, fire fighting, water safety, emergency medical assistance, and search and rescue. When trouble brews in the villages they serve, VPSOs are indeed the first to deal with it.

Perhaps for a number of reasons, a better description of the VPSOs should be "*kamikaze* cops."¹ VPSOs have working conditions unlike those faced by others responsible for law enforcement. These officers usually serve in a village by themselves and the villages they serve in are not connected to any road system and are sometimes an hour or more away by air from any back-up. Not only do VPSOs serve by themselves with back-up far away, they do so without the protection of a firearm. VPSOs are expected to be on-call 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week in order to deal with the problems that arise in what are some of the most violent-and-accident-prone places in the nation. For this job VPSOs receive wages and benefits that are substantially lower than what is afforded those with similar responsibilities elsewhere across the state.

It is not surprising, then, that one of the main problems that the VPSO program has faced is officer turnover. Since 1983, the first year for which adequate records are available, turnover in the VPSO program has averaged 36 percent per year. In other words, for every 100 VPSOs to have served in a calendar year 36 either quit or were fired. This turnover rate is unlike that seen anywhere else in the public safety sector of the labor force. The rates of VPSO turnover are actually closer to those of employees working in sales or entertainment than they are to police officers or fire fighters.

This report presents the results of a study that was designed and carried out to understand the factors associated with these tremendously high turnover rates. In this chapter, an introduction to the report is provided. This introduction will serve two basic purposes. First, it is a 'road map' for the remainder of the report. As such, it will provide the reader with a chapter-by-chapter synopsis, highlighting the theoretical perspectives considered, the research

¹ This characterization of the officers was suggested to the author by one of the VPSOs surveyed for the study.

methods used, and the findings revealed in the study. However, before providing this outline, this introduction will first consider the parameters of the overall report in order to clarify what it does and does not accomplish.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

The main goal of this report is to arrive at an understanding of VPSO turnover. Through a description of the extent of the turnover problem and a consideration of the factors associated with it. In other words, this report is an account of how much turnover there is in the VPSO program and an analysis of why there is so much. As this is a broad task in and of itself, the study was limited only to examining the turnover problem in the VPSO program.

Although it has been a number of years since the last external evaluation of the VPSO program (Price Waterhouse, 1984), neither this report, nor the study from which it was drawn, was meant to be an overall evaluation of the VPSO program. Officer turnover is but one of the issues facing the administrators of the VPSO program. It would be unfair to judge the program based upon this one issue. Instead, the program as a whole should be evaluated in its entirety in order to determine if it is achieving its desired effects with the expected consequences.²

This report is also not intended to be a record of VPSO dissatisfaction with the program. Although the officers have many valid complaints which are understandable given their circumstances, this research was in no way designed to capture or measure that disgruntlement in any systematic fashion. This is not to say that possible sources of VPSO dissatisfaction were not considered as explanations for the high turnover rates. The sources of dissatisfaction that were considered were those that have been suggested elsewhere in the literature on policing in general and the VPSO program specifically. They were not grounded in any qualitative examination allowing the officers to provide in-depth descriptions of their views and feelings about the program. Nevertheless, enough is known about the problems of the program and about the difficulties of policing in Native villages that it is possible to examine their effect on turnover.

While the scope of this report does not provide a complete examination of the VPSO program, the findings contained within are still important for a few reasons. First of all, the VPSO program and the provision of public safety services to rural Alaska have become

² In the best of worlds, all agencies in the criminal justice system, not just innovative ones such as the VPSO program, would be evaluated on a more regular basis.

important political issues over the past few years. Resolutions in support of VPSOs have been ratified by the Alaska Federation of Natives³ in their recent annual meetings. Likewise, a law suit has been filed by a group of Alaska Native Indian Tribes against the State of Alaska on the grounds that it has failed to provide adequate levels of police services to rural, non-highway Alaska Native villages.⁴ The findings from this research will provide empirical groundwork for discussions about how to deal with this issue. Knowing why some VPSOs are more likely to remain with the program may help guide the design of future delivery of public safety services to the Alaska bush.

The other benefit of this research is that it adds to what is currently a limited understanding of policing in places with tiny populations. A number of authors (Bartol, 1996; Bass, 1995; Hoffman, 1993) have commented on the relative lack of research about police departments with very few officers. Of the research that has been conducted, officer turnover has been mentioned as a prime difficulty in these small departments. The present study builds upon that research by examining both the amount of turnover in the VPSO program as well as the factors thought to be associated with it. These findings are also considered in light of the possibilities of providing community-oriented policing to rural and remote locales.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Following this introduction are six chapters aimed at allowing the reader to gain a clearer understanding of turnover in the VPSO program. This last part of the introduction serves as a “roadmap” for those six chapters. In doing so, it will describe the purpose of each chapter in terms of how it helps meet the ultimate goal of understanding the factors associated with VPSO turnover.

The second chapter of this report, serving primarily a background function, has two purposes. It first introduces the reader to the context of Alaska Native village life. Included in the first portion of Chapter 2 is a description of the geography, climate, population, economy, and culture of the Alaska Native villages that the VPSO program serves. The first part of Chapter 2 also considers the high rates of accidental and intentional violence in those same villages. As will become clear, the Alaska Native village context presents a unique circumstance

³ AFN is “the statewide political arm of Alaska Natives and their regional profit and nonprofit corporations” (Case, 1984)

⁴ *Alaska Inter-Tribal Council v. State of Alaska*, Case No. 3DI-99-113-CI, Alaska State Superior Court, Third Judicial District at Dillingham, 1999.

in which to provide public safety services. Chapter 2 will then turn to a discussion of the development of the VPSO program as a response to those special circumstances. Included is a description of prior frameworks for providing policing to Alaska Native villages and a discussion of how the VPSO program was organized in an attempt to alleviate some of the problems faced earlier. As will be shown, the VPSO program was developed to deal with a broad range of public safety issues — law enforcement, fire fighting, search and rescue, water safety, and emergency medical services — where a economies of scale do not allow for multiple agency responses. It was also developed in a way that has allowed for local authorities' to have say over the day-to-day operation of the program in their villages in order to insure that it meets local needs.

The third chapter of this report examines the extent of VPSO turnover. As will be shown in discussing the tremendously high turnover rates for previous policing efforts in Alaska Native villages, the current high levels of attrition in the VPSO program are nothing new. It isn't until the VPSO turnover rates are compared with those of other public safety organizations and with other occupational groups that one can appreciate just how high those rates actually are. Chapter 3 concludes with a look at some of the detrimental effects of VPSO turnover, including the lack of immediate public safety service in a village when an officer leaves the program and the provision of service by VPSOs without formal training once an officer is replaced.

The factors associated with VPSO turnover are examined beginning in Chapter 4 of this report. Primarily dealing with theoretical and methodological issues, Chapter 4 describes the theoretical underpinnings of the questionnaire used to gather information from former and currently-serving VPSOs for analysis of the probabilities of turnover. The questions contained in the survey instrument were developed from three different perspectives: (1) general police research which focuses upon job stress and the effects of satisfaction with salary and benefits upon police turnover; (2) research on the effects upon turnover of the problems faced by rural police officers; and (3) research regarding the difficulties of policing Native communities using Native employees. Once the theoretical development of the questionnaire has been considered, Chapter 4 moves to a discussion of the steps taken to administer the survey in a fashion that allowed for response completeness, high response rates, and the generalizability of results.

Chapter 5 of this report provides descriptive statistics based upon officers' responses to the questionnaire. These responses are examined in terms of the total for all VPSOs surveyed,

comparing Alaska Native officers versus non-Native officers, and comparing the officers who had served two or more years in the program at the time the data were analyzed with those officers who had served less than two years. For ease of understanding, these descriptive results are presented following the basic VPSO career path from the officers' motivations for joining the program through to their views on retirement benefits. A number of issues are examined along the way, including the officers' perceptions regarding VPSO pay, training, housing, safety, housing, Oversight Trooper contact, duty demands, equipment, relatives, and village support.

In Chapter 6 the expected reasons for VPSO turnover are examined. Data gathered in the survey of past and present VPSOs are used as indicators of the reasons for attrition from the program. In order to make sense of the numerous indicators (as presented in Chapter 5) available for trying to understand VPSO turnover, a two-step data analysis approach has been taken. First of all, principal components analysis is used to reduce the large number of variables to a smaller number of variables that was more conducive for the comparison of possible explanations. This smaller number of variables includes indicators of officer stress, perceptions of community support and training, views of pay and expenses, and measures of Alaska Native heritage. Proportional hazards regression, an event history analysis method, was then used in the second step of the analysis to determine which of the variables derived from the principal components analysis can best explain the likelihood that a VPSO will leave the program. According to the proportional hazards regression analysis, a lack of Alaska Native heritage, dissatisfaction with training, the use of food stamps, being stationed where there are no other police (such as Village or Tribal Police Officers), being single, and not working an extra job are the things most strongly associated with VPSO turnover.

The discussion and conclusion provided in Chapter 7 looks at the results of the analyses presented in Chapter 6. The hypotheses laid out earlier are re-examined with the broader meanings of those findings given consideration. As an explanation, no single perspective on VPSO turnover was any more convincing than any other. VPSO turnover does not appear to be associated only with their relative lack of pay, with the stresses the job brings, or with the issues surrounding the officers' Alaska Native heritage. Instead, variables from each of these perspectives helps to discern between the VPSOs that stay with the program versus those more likely to leave the program. Given that no single viewpoint was any more compelling than another, a different theoretical perspective on VPSO turnover which focuses upon the reasons

officers have for remaining with the program and the connections they have to others in the villages they serve is advanced. Chapter 7 concludes with a consideration of the ramifications of these findings as they pertain to the overall objectives of the VPSO program, to the problems of rural police departments, and to the feasibility of community-oriented policing in sparsely populated areas.

CHAPTER 2: ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES, THEIR PUBLIC SAFETY NEEDS, AND THE VPSO PROGRAM

Unique among organizations with law enforcement duties, the VPSO program has provided a number of policing and non-policing services to Alaska Native villages since its inception in 1980. Included in these non-policing duties are fire fighting, search and rescue, water safety, and emergency medical services. As will be explained below, the VPSO program was developed as a response to all of the public safety needs of Alaska Native villages and to economies of scale, since individual villages could not generate resources for separate agencies to handle specific problems. Prior to providing a full description of Alaska's VPSO program, this chapter will take a look at the Alaska Native villages the program serves and at those villages' public safety needs.

THE ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGE CONTEXT

A realistic assessment of the problem of turnover in Alaska's VPSO program must be grounded in an appreciation of the villages that the program is expected to serve. It is necessary to examine the geography, climate, population, and economy of the villages in the rural areas of the state served by the VPSO program. To have a complete understanding of what VPSOs confront in their jobs, it is also necessary to take a look at the extreme rates of accidents and intentional violence that plague these villages.

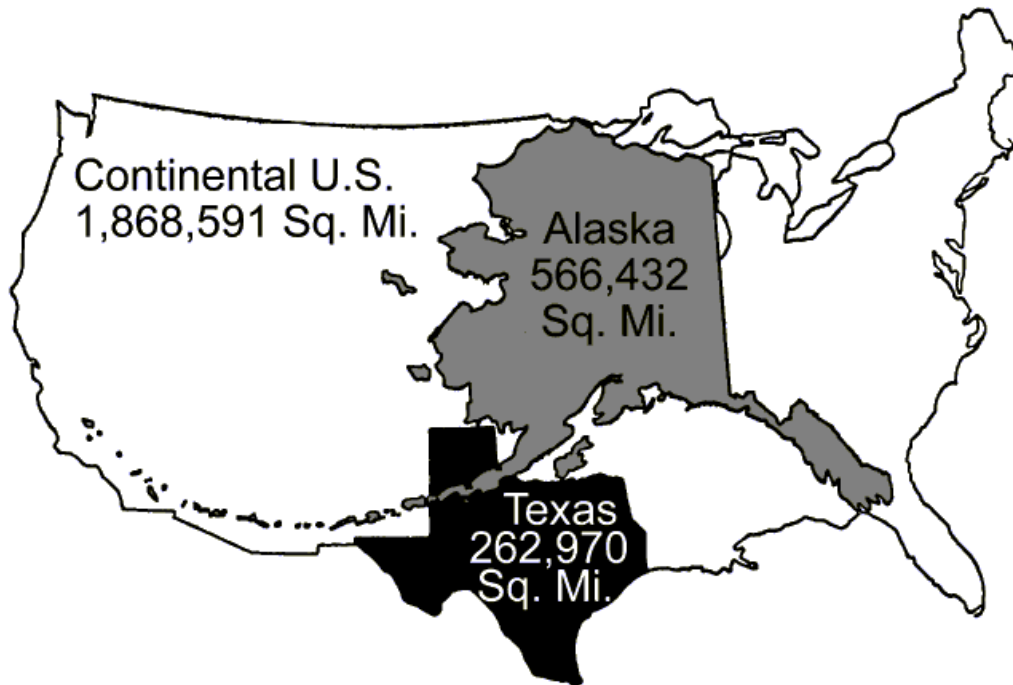
Geography and Climate

One of the most daunting obstacles to the provision of public safety services to the state of Alaska is its size. At more than 566,000 square miles, Alaska covers a land area that is one-fifth the size of the lower-48 states (Alaska Division of Tourism, 1999). When confronted by boastful Texans, people from Alaska like to point out that if Alaska was cut in half, Texas would become the third largest state in the Union (see Figure 1). The state is edged by 6,600 miles of coastline; when islands are included, there are 33,900 miles of "beach" in the state (Alaska Division of Tourism, 1999). This is, indeed, a great deal of area in need of public safety services.

As if its tremendous size weren't enough of an obstacle, the terrain of Alaska is also very imposing. Some areas of the state are rather mountainous: 17 out of the 20 highest peaks in the

U.S. are found in Alaska. Located in and around these mountainous regions are 29,000 square miles of glaciers (Alaska Division of Tourism, 1999). Where there aren't mountains or glaciers, you will generally find some sort of body of water. Across the state there are 3,000 rivers and enough lakes (over 3 million) to make Minnesota seem like a desert (Alaska Division of Tourism, 1999).

Figure 1: Relative Size of Alaska, Texas, and the Continental United States



The natural barriers imposed by vast wilderness and difficult terrain, require that travel throughout much of the state by aircraft. This is especially true for trips made in and out of Alaska Native villages, which are, for the most part, unconnected to the state's limited road system.⁵ On a per capita basis, Alaska has more pilots than any other state; as of 1996, 1 out of every 58 Alaska residents had a pilot's license (Alaska Division of Tourism, 1999).

Travel by air in Alaska can be a dangerous proposition for the general public and for the police. Aircraft fatalities among the general flying public in Alaska occur at a rate much higher than among than Alaskans traveling the state's streets and highways. According to a 1986 report by the Alaska State Epidemiologist, the annual aircraft fatality rate for the years 1963 through

⁵ All of the villages served by the VPSO program are off highway.

1981 was 799 per 100,000 licensed pilots. When these rates are compared to the annual fatality rate of 39 per 100,000 licensed drivers between 1980 and 1984, the “fatality rate associated with general aviation was 21 times greater than the fatality rate associated with motor vehicle use” (Middaugh, 1986, p. 3).

In the past, and to a lesser extent today with the presence of VPSOs, the need to travel by air is the source of delay in police response to Alaska Native villages. The great distances and lack of roads make police response times into Alaska Native villages among the slowest in the nation. The distinction between urban and Alaska Native villages response times to major emergencies was drawn very clearly by Angell (1981, p. 35):

“The average response time for police in an Alaskan city is less than half an hour. The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals advocated the goal of less than one minute for the police receipt of a citizen request for emergency assistance, and it maintained that no police department should take longer than ten minutes to place an officer on the scene. In contrast, 57 percent of the emergency requests from Alaska Native communities in rural areas are not answered within 24 hours of the incident. It seems safe to conclude that residents of Alaskan Native villages have the distinction of receiving the slowest police response in the entire United States.”

Travel in Alaska’s skies has also been dangerous for the police. Between 1930 and 1998 there were 34 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty in Alaska. While the majority of those officers were victims of a criminal homicide, 10 of the 34 (29%) were killed in plane crashes (Wilbanks, 1999). Relatively fewer police officers have been killed in traffic accidents in Alaska. Only 2 of the 34 officers killed in the line of duty in Alaska (6%) died in traffic accidents (Wilbanks, 1999). The proportions of officers that were the fatal victims of aircraft and motor vehicle accidents in Alaska are the inverse of those for national figures on officer deaths. Between 1980 and 1997 only 6 percent (137 out of 2467) of the officers killed in the line of duty were killed in aircraft accidents, whereas nearly 25 percent (611 out of 2467) of officers were the fatal victims of automobile or motorcycle accidents (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998).

The weather in Alaska can also be a further hindrance to efforts to provide public safety services. Although the state isn’t exactly the permanent “ice-box” it is often made out to be outside the state, it is common for temperatures in many areas of Alaska (especially in the interior, on the North Slope, and throughout the Yukon and Kuskokwim River deltas) to reach

minus 40°F during the long winter months. High winds and fog, however, actually have much more of an impact upon the efforts of public safety agencies and others flying throughout the state than does the cold. During the winter, depending upon which part of Alaska one is trying to reach, the weather may not meet the FAA's minimum flight safety standards of at least one-half mile visibility with winds less than 30 knots anywhere from 7 to 24 percent of the time (Decker, 1980).

According to the Alaska State epidemiologist, difficulties with weather and terrain are the second and third leading causes of fatal plane crashes in Alaska following the most prevalent cause, pilot error (Middaugh, 1986). Adverse wind conditions, low cloud ceilings, and fog are most often involved in non-fatal aviation accidents in Alaska, while fatal accidents are more often the result of colder temperatures and higher wind conditions (Middaugh, 1986).

The Alaska Native Population

The Alaska Native population is actually diverse. There are seven distinct groups of Alaska Natives (Abraham, et al., 1994). The *Tlingit*, *Haida*, and *Tsimshian* coastal Indians inhabit the state's southeast panhandle. *Athabaskan* Indians populate the river valleys of Alaska's interior. The Aleutian island chain is inhabited by the *Aleuts*. The southwest coast and the deltas of Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers are populated by the *Yupik* Eskimos. The *Iñupiat* Eskimos inhabit the North Slope and the far northwestern portions of the state.

While these cultures traditionally varied in their means of subsistence, family structures, and methods of social control, they have all to one extent or another seen a decline in their populations, a reduction in the number of speakers of their languages, and a loss of self-sufficiency (Napoleon, 1990). The past few hundred years have been a period of rapid change for the Alaska Native population. Their traditional life of semi-nomadic subsistence has been replaced by settlement in permanent communities and partial reliance upon goods and services from outside the region for survival (Alaska Natives Commission, 1994; Huskey, 1992). In what has been characterized as a process of colonization (Dryzek & Young, 1985), the traditional, self-reliant lifestyle of Alaska Natives has been replaced with a dependent and subordinate status (Berger, 1995). Tasks previously carried out by extended family groupings are now provided by government agencies in the areas of medicine, education, social control, and social welfare. The family structure and networks of the past have now been replaced by

nuclear families; elders are often spatially separated with the provision of single-family housing; and modern schools have replaced the oral traditions and apprenticeship-style child-rearing practices (Alaska Natives Commission, 1994). The rapid and overwhelming change faced by Alaska Natives is seen as causing widespread cultural shock and disruption at both the community and individual levels, which are, in turn, linked to the relatively high levels of violence found in many villages (Alaska Natives Commission, 1994; Lee, 1995; Napoleon, 1990).

When considering the Alaska Native population, it is helpful to think of Alaska as being divided into two parts. One part of Alaska, commonly referred to as the ‘railbelt,’ stretches from Fairbanks in the interior through Anchorage to the Kenai Peninsula. Although it is the smallest of the two parts from a geographic standpoint, the state’s population, economic development, and wealth are concentrated in the railbelt. The remainder of the state, larger in geographic area but more sparsely populated, is what has been termed “Village Alaska” (Huskey, 1992). The majority of Alaska Natives reside in the isolated rural communities that make up Village Alaska.⁶

A good way to understand the differences between these two parts of the state is through a comparison between the socio-economic and demographic make-up of Alaska Native villages and that of the state of Alaska and the city of Anchorage. Table 1 compares the socio-economic characteristics of the 74 Alaska Native villages which had VPSOs as of June 30, 1998 with those of Anchorage and with the state as a whole. A number of conclusions can be drawn from the figures presented in Table 1.

Not surprisingly, the 74 VPSO villages have populations that are almost exclusively Alaska Native. The mean percentage of the population that was Alaska Native in 1990 in those villages, 86 percent, was four times greater than what was found statewide. Not only were the 74 VPSO villages in 1990 mostly inhabited by Alaska Natives, but the Alaska Natives residing in those villages were also more likely to speak their native language compared to Alaska Natives across the state or those in Anchorage. The age structure of the Alaska Natives residing in the 74

⁶ My characterization of the state into these two parts obviously neglects the cities and towns in southeastern Alaska which, (e.g., Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka) while unconnected to the state rail and road system, certainly have more in common with the railbelt cities and towns than with the Alaska Native villages.

VPSO villages in 1990 was similar to that of Alaska Natives throughout the state but substantially younger than that of Alaska Natives living in Anchorage.

Table 1: 1990 Socio-Economic Characteristics of the 74 Alaska Native Villages Served by the VPSO Program at Mid-Year 1998, of the State of Alaska and the City of Anchorage.

1990 Village Attribute	Mean for 74 Villages	Median for 74 Villages	Total for Alaska	Total for Anchorage
1990 Population	322	281	550,043	226,338
1997 Estimated Population	364	310	611,300	254,849
<u>Percent Alaska Native</u>				
Total Population	86	92	16	7
Population Less Than 18 Years Old	40	42	48	20
Population 18 to 29 Years Old	19	19	25	13
Population 30 to 64 Years Old	35	33	21	66
Population More Than 64 Years Old	6	6	6	1
<u>Percent Alaska Native Population</u>				
That Speak Native Language at Home (ages 5+)	44	39	36	16
With Less Than High School Education (ages 25+)	47	49	37	24
<u>Rates Per 100 Alaska Native Adults (ages 15+)</u>				
Unemployment	27	26	22	21
Labor Force Participation	49	49	56	62
<u>Percent of Jobs in*</u>				
Forestry, Fishing, & Mining	5	0	7	6
Construction	4	1	7	6
Manufacturing	5	0	6	4
Transportation, Communication & Public Utilities	11	11	11	11
Wholesale & Retail Trade	11	11	19	21
Health Care	5	4	6	7
Education	34	33	10	7
Public Administration	16	14	12	12
Other Industries	10	8	21	26
<u>Percent of Households*</u>				
Earning Wage Income	86	86	89	91
Receiving Public Assistance	22	20	8	6
Without Public Sewer Access or Septic Tank	43	33	12	0
Median Income (\$)*	23,259	20,750	41,408	43,946

*Includes both Alaska Natives and non-Natives.

Source: 1990 U.S. Census

From an economic standpoint, Alaska Native villages are much worse off when compared to the state as a whole and, especially, when compared to Anchorage. Similar to what has been found in previous studies (Warring & Smythe, 1988), Table 1 shows that in 1990 Alaska Native adults from the 74 VPSO villages had higher rates of unemployment and lower rates of participation in the labor force than did Alaska Natives in all of Alaska or in the city of Anchorage. This relative lack of employment in the 74 VPSO villages (as well as for Alaska Natives in villages across the state) results in lower incomes and a higher reliance upon welfare. The rates of public assistance among the 74 VPSO villages in 1990, as shown in Table 1, were more than double that for the state and for Anchorage, while the median income in the 74 VPSO villages was roughly half that of the state or of Anchorage.

The reasons for the economic difficulties of Alaska Native villages are rather basic. According to Huskey (1992), the remoteness of most Alaska Native villages combined with their small populations makes economic self-sufficiency difficult. Instead of economic self-sufficiency, the Native villages of Alaska have what Morehouse (1989, p. 9) refers to as a “transfer economy” in which people are dependent upon “public programs, government employment, and various forms of subsidy” for survival. When the proportions of jobs in health care, education, and public administration are combined into a category of ‘government employment,’ we find that more than half of the jobs in the 74 VPSO villages were within the government in 1990 (see Table 1). This was roughly double the rate of ‘government employment’ in the state and in Anchorage that year.

Public Safety Needs

Compared to non-Native jurisdictions, Alaska Native villages are dangerous places. The available measures of crime and accidental death in those villages are much higher on average than those for Alaska as a whole and for the entire U.S. These tremendously high levels of social dysfunction provide good reason for a local public safety presence in Alaska Native villages.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of crime in Alaska Native villages because few studies have been able to provide complete accounts of the problem. According to Marenin (1992), an examination of crime rates in Alaska Native villages is difficult primarily because measures of crime at the village level are not published in any official reports. The Alaska Department of Public Safety’s (1999) annual *Crime in Alaska* only presents crime rates at the

municipal department level; data for all unincorporated areas of the state, which includes the Alaska Native villages served by the VPSO program, are reported in the statewide figures of offenses known to the Alaska State Troopers (Angell, 1979; Marenin, 1992).

Despite these difficulties, a pair of studies conducted over the past 25 years do provide for a comparison of crime rates in Alaska Native villages with those found elsewhere. As shown in Table 2, the rate of reported violent crime is much higher in Alaska Native villages, then in the state of Alaska or the U.S. while the rate of reported property crime of burglary is substantially lower. Angell's (1979) examination of 1976 crime rates in 56 Alaska Native villages (see Table 2) found homicide rates that were three times the national rate and rape rates that were four times what was reported nationally. Lee (1988; 1995), who looked at crime rates in 16 Yupik villages for the years 1983 through 1987 (see Table 2), found similar disparities between Alaska Native village crime rates and those beyond the region. Homicide and aggravated assault rates for the 16 Yupik villages were double those of the U.S. while the rate of forcible rape was nearly 8 times that of the nation as a whole.

Table 2: Crime Rates in Selected Alaska Native Villages, the State of Alaska, and the United States.

Years and Jurisdictions	Offense Rate per 100,000 Population			
	Forcible Rape	Aggravated Assault	Homicide	Burglary
<u>1976</u>				
56 Alaska Native Villages	99	326	28	936
Alaska	52	228	11	1332
United States	26	229	9	1439
<u>1983-1987</u>				
16 Yupik Villages	286	698	16	757
Alaska	81	382	11	1145
United States	36	314	8	1313

Sources: Angell, 1979; Lee, 1988.

Another more fruitful and up-to-date understanding of the public safety needs of Alaska Native villages can be obtained by taking a look at studies based on records of death, but while measures derived from these records are more reliable and current, they do little to contradict the earlier views of Alaska Native villages as being rather dangerous places (Zenk, 1993).

Berman and Leask's (1994) examination of death certificates for the years 1980 through 1990 indicates that the rate of violent death among Alaska Natives living in small communities with populations less than 1,000 residents is quite high. Compared to national averages, the typical Alaska Native from a village is about three-and-a-half times as likely to be the victim of a homicide, four-and-a-half times as likely to be the victim of an accidental death, and five times as likely to be the victim of a suicide (Berman & Leask, 1994). The rates of violent death in these small villages are especially pronounced in the regions of the state — the southwest, the interior, and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta — where VPSOs are most likely to be posted (Berman & Leask, 1994). Recent research has also shown that the rates of violent death are most prevalent in villages that do not prohibit the importation or possession of alcohol (Landen, et al., 1997).

An updated look at the amount of accidental and violent death compiled by the U.S. Indian Health Service (Sealock, 1997) paints a similar dangerous picture of life in Alaska Native villages. The accidental and violent death rates based upon death certificate records and compiled by 'Indian Health Service Unit' regions (which include Alaska Native villages and regional administrative 'hub' villages) from the U.S. Indian Health Service records for the years 1990 through 1995 are presented in Table 3. In the five Indian Health Service Units serving areas that have primarily Alaska Native populations and a large conglomeration of villages, the rates of death by accidents were at least three and a half times the national average, the rates of death by drowning were at least 16 times higher than the national average, and the rates of death by suicide were at least three times the national average (Sealock, 1997). Homicide was the only type of violent death in 1990 through 1995 for which the Alaska Native rates in some of the regions were comparable to those found across the U.S. However, the rates of death by homicide among Alaska Natives in the interior and along Bristol Bay were at least nearly double national rates (Sealock, 1997).

Aside from the measures of crime and of accidental and violent deaths, the other area of public safety that can be considered is fire safety. Alaska, and Alaska Native villages in particular, is notorious for its horrendous record of fire safety. The few available statistics indicate that death by fire is much more prevalent in Alaska than it is across the country and that Alaska Natives face a much higher risk of death in a fire than do non-Natives (Zenk, 1992). According to the state Fire Marshal, in 1996 there were five times as many fire deaths per capita

in Alaska than in the U.S. as a whole (Stanton, 1997). Alaska Natives have a rate of fire death that is much higher. For instance, Alaska Native children under 5 years of age have a rate of deaths from fire eight times greater than the national average (State Injury Prevention Coalition, 1994). The Alaska Native population as a whole is certainly over represented in the fire death statistics. Between 1980 through 1989, 47 percent of the victims of fire death were Alaska Natives (State Injury Prevention Coalition, 1994). While it is not possible to break down the fire death statistics according to whether they occurred in a Alaska Native village, records provided by the Alaska State Fire Marshal's Office to the author for this report indicate that the greatest number of fire deaths for the 21 year period 1978 through 1998 occurred in the western region of the state which is largely populated by Alaska Natives.

Table 3: 1990-1995 Alaska Native Accidental and Violent Death Rates (per 100,000 population) in U.S. Indian Health Service Units Serving 'Village' Alaska compared with 1994 Rates for United States as a Whole

Indian Health Service Unit	Cause of Death			
	Accidents	Drowning	Suicide	Homicide
Bristol Bay	140.2	28.0	35.0	17.5
Interior Alaska	126.3	25.0	74.9	31.2
Kotzebue	172.7	37.8	83.6	8.1
Norton Sound	128.8	25.3	78.3	2.5
Yukon-Kuskokwim	135.3	48.7	49.6	11.7
United States	33.6	1.5	12.0	9.6

Source: Sealock, 1997.

The provision of public safety services to Alaska Native villages, while difficult, is certainly necessary, and given the problems of travel due to geography and climate, it is clear that some sort of public safety presence stationed at the village level is required. The VPSO program has been the most recent effort to provide that presence.

POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES IN ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES

The idea that Alaska Native villages can best be served by a local public safety presence is by no means a new one. Since long before Alaska statehood, as far back as 1885 according to some sources (Otto, 1986 [Cited in Marenin & Copus, 1991]), police services to rural Alaska Native villages has been provided by specially appointed Alaska Native law enforcement officers. The VPSO program built upon this tradition by not only working to provide a local law

enforcement presence in the villages, but also attempted to deal with the other public safety needs of Alaska Native villages looked at in the previous section of this chapter. Indeed, the VPSO program, as it stands today, can be seen as a continuation of two historical trends in the way that police and public safety services are delivered in Alaska Native villages. First of all, it is the latest development in the movement toward more localized control over, and support for, the law enforcement function in Alaska Native villages. Second, the program has provided an explicit formal extension of the responsibilities of the local police into other areas of public safety not usually associated with the police role.

Village Policing Prior to the VPSO Program

From the time that Alaska became an American possession to the mid-1960s, Alaska Natives serving as police officers worked in what can be thought of as an auxiliary role. According to Marenin and Copus, these officers served “in an ancillary capacity to federal and state law enforcement agents” (1991, p. 7). While little is known about the duties of these early Alaska Native police, given the “sporadic, inefficient, and uncoordinated” (Alaska Department of Public Safety, 1990) nature of law enforcement at that time, it is likely that they focused primarily upon criminal matters. The extent to which villages exercised control over their Alaska Native police also is not clear. On the other hand “the most influential” (Spicer, 1927, p. 48 [cited in Marenin, 1989a]) men would be by nature the source of village control, the argument might be made that local village control over the selection of officers was less important than was having an officer in place who could do the government’s bidding. This is all the more likely since it was not until after statehood that formal village governments would have been recognized as legitimate by federal and state authorities and as having an interest in the selection and supervision of village police.

The first major systematic effort by the Alaska State Troopers to put in place a local village law enforcement effort was the Village Police Officer (VPO) program. Initiated in the mid-1960s, the Troopers drew on a number of sources (the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, the State of Alaska, , the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration [LEAA], the Comprehensive Employment Training Act [CETA], the local villages themselves, and after the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the Native Corporations) for program funding. Most of the VPO funding went toward officer salaries, leaving little for equipment, supplies, or training

(Angell, 1979; Marenin & Copus, 1991; Alaska Department of Public Safety, 1990). A survey of VPOs conducted in 1978 found that only 42 percent of respondents had received any training at all (Angell, 1979). According to Angell (1981), many VPOs lacked paper for record keeping and report writing. He estimated that fewer than half of VPOs made any attempt to keep records. The lack of support was worse for the majority of VPOs who served villages that lacked detention or 'sleep-off' facilities (Angell, 1981). Those officers would often have to take intoxicated individuals into their own homes for sobering-up (Lonner & Duff, 1983). While the VPO program continues today,⁷ its capacity has been greatly reduced by a number of problems including a lack of funding, very high turnover rates, inadequate training, and poor officer performance (Marenin & Copus, 1991).

Another of the problems with the VPO program was a lack of officer support from the community and from local village councils. Little is known for certain about the degree of control local villages had over their VPOs. For instance, in the many reports that have looked at the program (e.g., Alaska Department of Public Safety, 1990; Angell, 1978; 1979; 1981; Lonner & Duff, 1983; Marenin, 1989a; Marenin & Copus, 1991), no mention has been made concerning the method by which VPOs were chosen for a community. However, there is evidence that Alaska Native villagers and their councils were not supportive of the VPOs (Lonner & Duff, 1983). Conn's (1982) examination of the evolution of liquor laws in the villages surrounding the southwestern Alaska town of Bethel indicates a general disregard for the village police and for the village councils which sought to deal with problems brought about by drinking. "Villagers questioned the capacity or authority of councils to intervene in liquor problems. As Willie Alexie⁸ of Napakiak put it, young people who misbehaved in Bethel thought they were 'bigger than the council' when they returned to the village" (Conn, 1982, p. 47). Besides the villagers' lack of support for the police and the village councils, there was often a lack of support for the police within the village councils themselves. One of the major complaints of VPOs noted in Angell's (1979) survey of village police was a lack of acceptance by, and support from, the village council. As pointed out by Marenin, "Members of the AST in charge of training VPOs

⁷ 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 that functions in conjunction with the VPSO. See generally 13 AAC 89.010./13 AAC 89.150.

⁸ A VPO famous for arresting individuals making their way up-river from Bethel carrying liquor.

found that VPOs, once they were returned to their villages, lacked support from their village councils" (1989a, pp. 9-10).

The lack of support toward the VPOs made their jobs all the more difficult since they were also frequently called upon to perform various other public safety tasks and that their duties were not necessarily confined to law enforcement. Much like the police in urban areas (Scott, 1981; Walker, 1992), the VPOs spent the majority of their time in duties other than those dealing with criminal behavior. The results of Angell's (1979) survey of VPOs shows that the typical officer spent only 29 percent of his or her time in law enforcement activities. The remainder of officers' time was spent on order maintenance matters (35 %) and service matters (36 %) including fire fighting, emergency medical assistance, and rescue work. This was problematic because the VPOs were neither equipped nor trained for their order maintenance and public safety role. For example, equipment for fire fighting and emergency medical services was almost non-existent among the VPOs. Of those officers surveyed by Angell (1981), 30 percent had access to a fire extinguisher and only 10 percent had first aid equipment. However, even those VPOs who were properly equipped were not trained for their public safety role. "The instruction provided village officers tended to emphasize the 'law enforcement' as opposed to the most common responsibilities of village police officers." (Angell, 1978, p. 45).

The VPSO Program

The latest attempt to deal with the law enforcement and public safety needs of Alaska Native villages is the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program. Beginning as a pilot project in 1979 with 19 officers, the VPSO program had its formal start in 1981 with 52 positions being filled (Marenin & Copus, 1991, p. 10).⁹ Over the years there have been as many as 125 authorized VPSO positions across the state. As of June 30, 1998, there were 75 VPSO serving 74 Alaska Native villages. From its outset, the VPSO program was designed to deal with the problems of training and equipping officers to deal with the broad range of public safety issues facing Alaska Native villages and to instill within the program a level of support for, and local control over, the provision of law enforcement and public safety services to communities.

⁹ The initial enthusiasm of the state legislature for the VPSO program was strong. The Department of Public Safety requested \$500,000 to start the program; the legislature gave them over \$2.6 million. As of 1990 funding for the program was around \$6 million per year (Marenin & Copus, 1991, p. 10)

The major theme of the original VPSO concept paper presented to the Alaska State Legislature by the Alaska Department of Public Safety in 1979 was the overall public safety needs of Alaska Native villages (Messick, 1979). According to that paper, rural Alaska had the distinction of having the worst record for public safety of any of the 50 states (Messick, 1979). The Alaskan rates of death at that time by accident in the water (through boating accidents and drowning) and by fire led the nation. Despite its small population, Alaska was also among the states with the greatest number of search and rescue missions. These public safety problems were said to be compounded by the geographic isolation faced by most Alaska native villages and the general lack of local government resources for emergency medical and police assistance. The Alaska 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 VPO program (Messick, 1979).

Although they handle a wide variety of tasks (Wood & Trostle, 1997), VPSOs are expected to be proficient in five different areas of public safety: law enforcement, fire fighting, search and rescue, water safety, and emergency medical services. The training VPSOs receive is designed to meet these areas. Conducted over a nine-week period at the state Public Safety Academy in Sitka, a portion of the training is devoted to each of the areas of VPSO responsibility (see Appendix 1 for the curriculum from the latest VPSO academy). During the year VPSOs are also brought together on a regional basis for one week of refresher and updated training. All together, it is thought that this type of training provides VPSOs with the rudimentary tools required to handle most incidents that are serious threats to life and property in Alaska Native villages (Messick, 1979).

The VPSO program is uniquely organized in an attempt to allow for increased local control over public safety services. Messick, in the original VPSO concept paper, argued that "the approach must place emphasis upon local decision making and control to assure the program meets village objectives and concerns" (1979, p. 8). It was hoped that by allowing for villages to have a much greater say regarding its operation the lack of support given to VPOs and to pre-statehood village police would not affect the VPSO program (Marenin, 1989a).

To understand the level of local control over the VPSO program, it is necessary to take a look at how the program is organized. Administration of the VPSO program is divided between three different levels: the Alaska State Troopers, regional non-profit Native corporations, and, at

the local level, Alaska Native villages. Each level has specific responsibilities when it comes to selecting, training, equipping, supervising, and paying VPSOs.

Unlike the prior village police efforts which relied upon numerous sources of ‘soft money’ for their financial support, the VPSO program receives all of its funding from a single source: the State of Alaska. All program costs are contained in a single line item in the Alaska State Troopers’ budget. One part of the VPSO budget goes toward the Troopers’ oversight administration of the program. The remainder of the funds go to regional non-profit Native corporations for the day-to-day operational costs of the program.

The Troopers, whose policing jurisdiction is basically all areas in the state that lack municipal police services, play a major role in the administration of the VPSO program. Apart from their role as trainers and issuers of some equipment, the Troopers’ main duty toward the program is the field supervision of VPSOs. Each VPSO is assigned an ‘Oversight Trooper’ (a commissioned Alaska State Trooper in a central location that is, in some cases, 300 miles away from the VPSO posting) who acts as a mentor and provides technical assistance and on-the-job training. In high risk or complex situations, including all felony cases, 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 generally by air or snow machine. Oversight visits are made by the Trooper approximately once every two months. During these non-emergency visits the Oversight Trooper provides on-the-job training in criminal investigation, search and rescue, and any other areas in which the VPSO may be having problems.

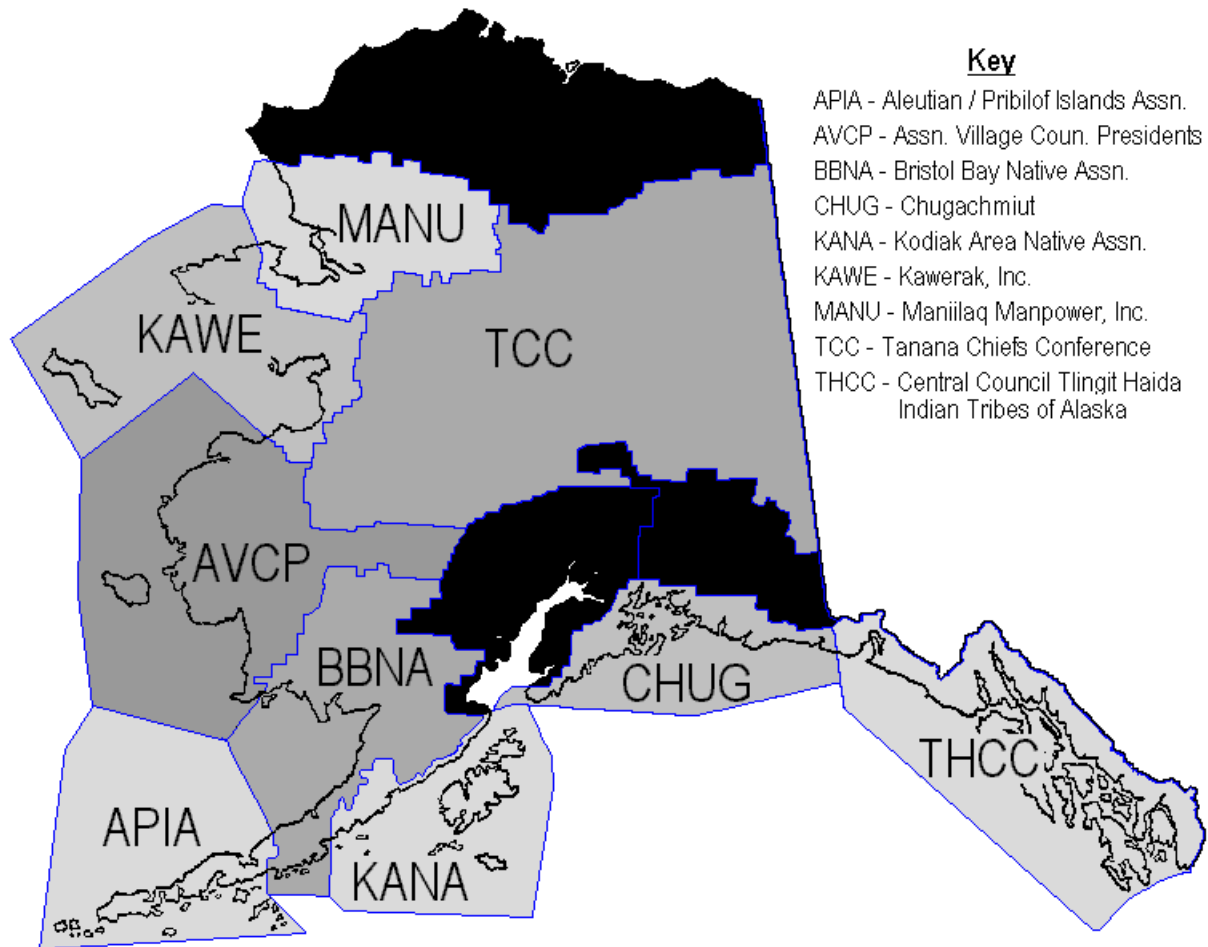
Besides their field visits and the provision of on-the-job training, the supervisory duties of Oversight Troopers are numerous. According to Marenin and Copus (1991, p. 11-12), Oversight Troopers have the “responsibility to check on the work of their VPSOs, ... follow up on actions taken by the VPSOs and check their notebooks and records, ensure that VPSOs submit their bi-weekly reports on time, ... maintain contact with village council members, approve the hiring by VPSOs of emergency guards to hold detained or arrested suspects, [and to] submit personnel evaluation forms on their VPSOs.” The Oversight Troopers also have the responsibility for taking disciplinary action against poorly performing VPSOs and for reporting such actions in writing to the statewide VPSO coordinator and the regional non-profit corporation (Marenin & Copus, 1991).

Although field supervision of VPSOs is provided by the Alaska State Troopers, VPSOs are paid by, and are considered to be employees of, the regional non-profit Native corporations found across the state. As these ‘non-profits’ are unique to Alaska, a bit of explanation of what they are is in order. When the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was enacted in 1971, 12 regional for-profit Native corporations were created for the purpose of investing funds received from land claims. Coinciding in area with these for-profit corporations are an equal number of regional non-profit Native corporations (Case, 1984). These non-profits play a significant role in the lives of Alaska Native village residents. “The non-profits have become the conduit for federal and state grant funds. They actively compete for grants and control much of the service delivery (education, employment counseling, health, housing, subsistence resources, cultural preservation) to villages or to Natives living in cities. In effect, they perform functions normally left to local government, but under delegated authority” (Marenin 1989b, p. 9). Given their experience in the administration of government-funded programs combined with a local awareness of the specific needs of the areas to be served, these regional non-profit corporations are viewed as being particularly well situated to provide administrative support to the VPSO program (Marenin, 1989a).

Each non-profit has a VPSO Coordinator who administers the program for the corporation. The duties of these VPSO Coordinators are also numerous. They are responsible for the management of payroll and insurance and retirement plans as well as for record-keeping regarding personnel files and the expenditure of grant funds. The VPSO Coordinators also assist the villages and the Troopers in the process of recruiting, hiring, and terminating VPSOs. A map displaying the jurisdiction of these regional non-profit corporations is shown in Figure 2.

Village control over the VPSO program comes from two different sources. First of all, the villages have the choice of whether to participate in the program. According to Marenin and Copus (1991, p. 11), “those communities who want a VPSO appeal to their non-profit corporation; the non-profit requests money from the state; once the money is received, villages that will receive VPSO positions are selected by the non-profits, in cooperation with the Alaska State Troopers.” In other words, a village cannot have a VPSO imposed upon it. With a recent cutback in the number of positions in the program, however, the number of villages that would like to have a VPSO outnumbers the villages that are actually afforded one.

Figure 2: Regional Native Non-Profit Corporations Responsible for Administration of Village Public Safety Officer Program.



The other source of village control over the VPSO program is their power to select and terminate officers. Although hiring and firing of VPSOs is generally conducted in consultation with the non-profits and the Troopers (Marenin & Copus, 1991), the villages have the ultimate discretion over who becomes their VPSO and whether that officer is retained or dismissed.

Given their inadequate resources, the local villages' responsibilities to the VPSO program are limited. The villages are responsible for providing office space, telephone service, and a holding cell for the VPSO. They are also responsible for obtaining any equipment above and beyond that provided by the Alaska State Troopers.

With its unique organizational structure and the officers' multiple task bundle, the VPSO can be thought of as what Captain John Stearns, former VPSO program coordinator for the Alaska State Troopers, referred to as "community policing at its rawest" (Associated Press, 1992). Based upon "the idea that policing should be 'home grown' rather than imposed and

should encourage local initiative and participation in the determination of public safety needs” (Marenin, 1989a, p. 13), four different aspects of the VPSO program make it a prime example of a community policing program:

1. policing authority is decentralized at the community level;
2. responsibilities to state law and to traditional social controls require officers to go beyond meeting minimal legal requirements and encourage them to employ problem-solving techniques to perform with effectiveness;
3. the generalist conception of the policing role stresses the complexities of public safety and social order to address all causes of disorder and threats to welfare; and
4. the participation of the community is built into the organizational structure of the program with the involvement of local village councils and regional non-profit corporations in personnel and operational decisions (Marenin, 1990).

In short, the VPSO program provides a community-based response to the distinct needs of modern-day Alaska Native villages.

Throughout the years, the VPSO program has developed a good deal of support within the Alaska Native community. In 1998, for example, the Alaska Federation of Natives passed a resolution at its annual convention calling for the state to increase funding for the program and to expand the program into Alaska Native villages located on the state’s highway system (Alaska Federation of Natives, 1998). Research by Marenin (1994) provides further confirmation of the program’s acceptance by Alaska Natives. Through interviews with 47 residents of two different Alaska Native villages, he found that respondents desired the services provided by their VPSOs:

Villagers want effective protection and the maintenance of order for situations outside the immediate family. They prefer to deal informally with problems that involve family. If the danger is serious or if repeated efforts have failed, even family ties can be overridden. Conflicts, disputes, and crime are immediate and practical problems. Villagers prefer to live in the village, but that is not an easy life. They do not want disorder and crime to complicate their lives even further. They want a VPSO who is strong, which means she or he will be unaffected by family ties, will enforce village ordinances and state law, is willing to break up fights, take away guns, and protect residents (Marenin, 1994, p. 311).

Today in Alaska the relationship between the Alaska Native community and the state government is, to put it mildly, very strained. Given that the VPSO program is the one of the few efforts of state government in Alaska Native villages that actually has the support of the

Alaska Native population, it is unfortunate that the program has had a problem with the turnover of its officers since its inception. The next chapter of this report examines just how extensive that problem is.

CHAPTER 3: MEASURES OF VPSO TURNOVER AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Throughout its colorful history Alaska has been a state known for boom/bust economies, seasonal employment, and a transient population. Although the Klondike gold rush was a century ago, a large portion of employment in the state today is still tied to the ups and downs of natural resource extraction and to the seasonal fishery and tourist sectors of the economy (Weeden, 1978). Given this history, it is reasonable to expect that turnover among police in Alaska would be higher than what is found elsewhere in the country.

This chapter examines the extent of officer attrition and turnover within the Alaska Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program. It first looks at the problem of turnover as it has affected prior efforts at providing public safety services to remote Alaska Native villages. Reported rates of attrition in those previous programs were quite high. The chapter then examines the amount of turnover in the VPSO program since its inception in the early 1980s. Compared with what is found in police agencies across the state and the remainder of the nation, turnover rates in the VPSO program have been, and remain, very high. This chapter then provides an analysis of the typical length of service villages receive from a VPSO and the amount of time VPSOs spend in the program. Generally speaking, the typical village has a VPSO for no more than a year. Even though transfers between villages do occur, the average VPSO still spends less than 12 months in the program. Finally, the chapter considers some of the detrimental effects of the turnover problem in Alaska Native villages, including the lack of immediate public safety service in a village and the provision of service by VPSOs without formal training.

TURNOVER IN NON VPSO RURAL ALASKAN POLICING

The turnover of police officers working in rural, remote Alaska villages has been a problem ever since statehood. The available figures for the last 25 years show the attrition rates of rural police to be quite high. An extreme example of turnover occurred in the Barrow Police Department in the 1970s. Between 1975 and 1976 there were 8 different chiefs of police hired by the city of Barrow. During that same period the annual turnover rate of police officers was 500 percent (Moeller, 1978).

Although not as extreme as those of Barrow, the VPO program (see Chapter 2) also had particularly high turnover rates. Angell (1979) reported a 120 percent turnover rate among

VPOs in 1977. With turnover rates that high, many more officers were trained than remained on the job. Only 25 of the 125 VPOs that received training between 1971 and 1978 were still employed as a VPO in May of 1978 (Angell, 1978). For instance, Moeller (1978) reports that of the 145 VPOs trained at the state Village Police Training Academy in Sitka over a 3 year period in the mid 1970s, only 25 of those trained remained on the job in the 4 years following the beginning of the training program. The turnover in the VPO program was so high that Angell argued that “entire village populations may eventually be trained as village police officers in the continuing effort to keep trained officers in each village” (1978, p. 67 – cited in Marenin, 1989a, p. 11).

MEASURES OF TURNOVER IN THE VPSO PROGRAM

The VPSO program has not been immune from the high turnover rates that have plagued other efforts to provide police and public safety services to rural communities. Prior to the present research, Marenin and Copus (1991) examined the amount of turnover in the VPSO program for the eight year period 1982 through 1989. Using a listing of current and former VPSOs provided by the Alaska State Troopers, Marenin and Copus determined that between 1982 and 1989 a total of 640 VPSOs filled 115 to 125 positions across the state. Roughly put, there was an average of between five and six individuals-per-position over the first eight years of the VPSOs program’s existence. Of the VPSOs serving between 1982 and 1989, the average officer did not last for more than a year-and-a-half in the position (Marenin & Copus, 1991, p. 16).

Using an updated version of the list¹⁰ of former and current VPSOs provided to the author by the Alaska State Troopers (AST), for this study we can examine the extent of the turnover problem in the program to a greater degree. Basic information on that updated list including the date of hire, the date of termination, the village of employment, the regional non-profit corporation of employment, the name of the VPSO, and, where recorded, the reason for termination permits assessing turnover in some detail. From these variables it is possible to compute turnover rates for the program as a whole and by region over the past decade-and-a-half. The variables allow for calculation of the amount of time VPSOs spend in

¹⁰ The list of VPSOs used in this portion of the study is titled the “State of Alaska Department of Public Safety, Village Public Safety Officer Report, Historical Records by Corporation.”

the program. It is also possible to estimate the length of time villages go without a VPSO and how long VPSOs serve a village without the benefit of formal training.

Measuring Employment Turnover

Although seemingly uncomplicated, job turnover can be measured in different ways. In general, turnover rates are computed by dividing the number of people leaving a job over a given time period by the number of people employed during that time period. While the numerator of this equation is fairly straightforward (i.e., the number of people leaving), the denominator (i.e., the number of people employed) has varied depending upon the study. Some studies, such as Fry's (1983) comparison of differences in turnover between female and male deputies in a California sheriff's department, employ a commonly used formula suggested by many turnover researchers such as Mobley (1982), Peskin (1973), Price (1977), and van der Merwe and Miller (1975):

$$\text{Turnover Rate} = \frac{\text{number of employees who leave in a period}}{\text{average number of employees in the period}} \quad [\text{Equation 1}]$$

The 17.3 percent turnover rate reported for that sheriff's department in fiscal year 1979-80 was calculated by dividing the 70 deputies leaving the department that year into the 399 weekly average number of sworn personnel for the year (Fry, 1983). This measure tells us how many people leave a job during a given time period as a proportion of the *number of people who typically work* at any point during that period.

Other turnover studies have used a denominator that takes into account the total number of personnel working over a time period, such as the course of a given year:

$$\text{Turnover Rate} = \frac{\text{number of employees who leave in a period}}{\text{total number of employees working in the period}} \quad [\text{Equation 2}]$$

For example, Whipple, Oehkerling, and Del Grosso (1991), in their examination of turnover in rural and urban police departments in South Dakota, calculated the turnover rate "by dividing the total number of separations by the total number of full-time sworn personnel" (p. 36). This latter turnover measurement method tells us how many officers leave a department in a time period as

a proportion of the *total number of people working* during that time period. The 11.8 percent turnover rate reported by Whipple, Oehkerling, and Del Grosso (1991) for South Dakota police departments was calculated by dividing the number of turnovers (71) by the total number of personnel who worked during the year (599).

Use of one or the other of these variations on measuring turnover will, of course, lead to differences in the resulting turnover rates. The first equation (Equation 1), with a smaller denominator, results in higher turnover rates than the second equation (Equation 2) with its larger denominator. While there is no rule of thumb in the literature for selecting one equation over the other to compute turnover rates, an argument can be made that the second equation — which includes in the denominator all officers that work over a given time period — may be a better choice for the purposes of the present study. As will be shown later in this chapter, many VPSOs do not last for a single year in the program. Some years in some communities it is possible for more than two VPSOs to serve. Using the average number of people over a year in the denominator does not account for the great number of people moving in and out of the program.

Turnover Rates in the VPSO Program

Regardless of the turnover measure used, the rate at which VPSOs leave the program is very high. It is possible to compute turnover rates for the program using date of hire and date of separation records from the AST lists of former and current VPSOs. Turnover rates computed using both of the methods described above will be made here.

Using Equation 2 above — the most conservative of the turnover rate equations — indicates that throughout its history the VPSO program has had turnover rates that are very high. In Table 4 the turnover rate is computed as a percentage dividing the number of terminations in a year by the total number of VPSOs employed in that year. These rates were calculated for the years 1983 (the first year that complete records are available) through 1997. The turnover rates between those years ranged from a high of 45 percent in 1992 to a low of 24 percent just two years later in 1994. The mean turnover rate for the 1983 through 1997 period was 35 percent. Based upon the total number of VPSOs employed in a year, it appears as though the largest number of terminations came between 1987 and 1992 when it was typical for more than 60 VPSOs per year to leave the program. During that same period, as seen in the third column of

Table 4, a good number of the VPSOs hired during a calendar year did not make it to the next calendar year. With the exception of 1997, it appears that the turnover situation had improved somewhat in the latter years examined.

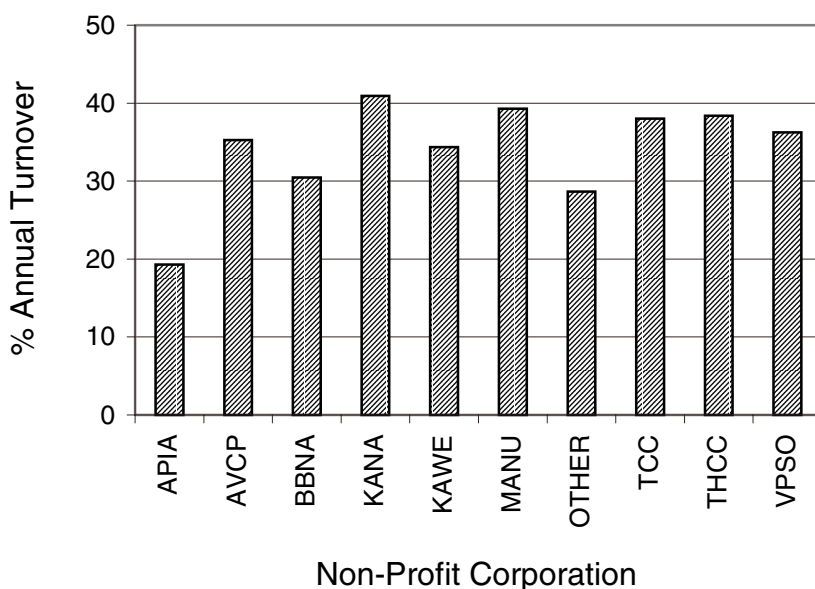
Table 4: Yearly Rates of VPSO Turnover Computed as a Percentage of the Total Number Employed During Year, 1983 to 1997.

Year	Number of VPSOs who...				Total VPSOs employed during year	Number of terminations	Percent turnover rate
	began, but didn't end year	were hired during year, but didn't end year	began and ended year	were hired during year and finished year			
1983	24	14	56	44	138	38	28
1984	44	18	56	43	161	62	39
1985	38	11	60	50	159	49	31
1986	40	12	71	31	154	52	34
1987	51	14	51	44	160	65	41
1988	34	17	61	43	155	51	33
1989	50	19	54	45	168	69	41
1990	39	22	60	45	166	61	37
1991	46	27	59	40	172	73	42
1992	53	18	46	40	157	71	45
1993	31	21	55	27	134	52	39
1994	22	10	60	40	132	32	24
1995	32	6	68	18	124	38	31
1996	36	0	50	45	131	36	27
1997	39	14	56	23	132	53	40

A breakdown of the turnover rates by regional non-profit corporation shows that the problem of attrition in the VPSO program is widespread across the state. Based upon the equation using the total number of VPSOs employed in a year as the denominator, the average annual turnover rates from 1983 through 1997 for the nine regional non-profit corporations are shown in Figure 3. With the exception of two of the “Non-Profits,” the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association (APIA) and the non-profit corporations representing VPSOs in Southcentral Alaska (“OTHER”), turnover rates across the state were all above 30 percent. The highest turnover rates among the regional non-profit corporations were for the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) at 41 percent. Other regional non-profit corporations with turnover rates above the 35 percent program rate include the Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (THCC), Maniilaq Manpower, Incorporated (MANU), and the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC). Turnover

rates for the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA), Kawerak, Incorporated (KAWE), and Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) regional non-profit corporations were either equal to, or less than, the rates for the program as a whole.

Figure 3: Average Annual VPSO Turnover Rate Among Regional Non-Profit Corporations, 1983-1997.



The calculation of VPSO turnover by the method most often used in studies of personnel attrition, the method which follows Equation 1, produces rates that are much higher than those shown above in Table 4. The turnover rates shown in Table 5 are roughly 20 to 25 percent higher than what is reported in Table 4. This is to be expected given that the rates are based upon the number of VPSOs who typically work at any one point in time. The denominator used to calculate the turnover rates shown in Table 5, the mean number of VPSOs employed at mid-month, was calculated by adding the number of VPSOs employed on January 15th with the number employed on February 15th with the number employed on the 15th of the rest of the months and dividing by 12. When this smaller denominator is divided into the same numerator (the number of terminations), the rates produced are naturally higher.

The rates of turnover shown in Table 5 are very high. Between 1983 and 1997 the VPSO turnover rate ranged between a low of 34 percent in 1994 to a high of 72 percent in 1992. In 9 out of the 15 years there was 50 percent or more turnover in the VPSO program. Overall, the mean turnover rate for program for the 15 years looked at in Table 5 was 55 percent. Translated

into what it means to the communities served by the program, these figures indicate that, on average, a village would be more likely than not to lose its VPSO in a given year.

Table 5: Yearly Rates of VPSO Turnover Computed as a Percentage of the Mean Number of Positions at Mid-Month, 1983-1997.

Year	Number of terminations	Mean number of VPSOs employed at mid-month	Turnover Rate (%)
1983	38	87	44
1984	62	102	61
1985	49	103	48
1986	52	105	50
1987	65	95	69
1988	51	101	51
1989	69	103	67
1990	61	102	60
1991	73	104	70
1992	71	99	72
1993	52	88	59
1994	32	95	34
1995	38	93	41
1996	36	82	44
1997	53	83	64

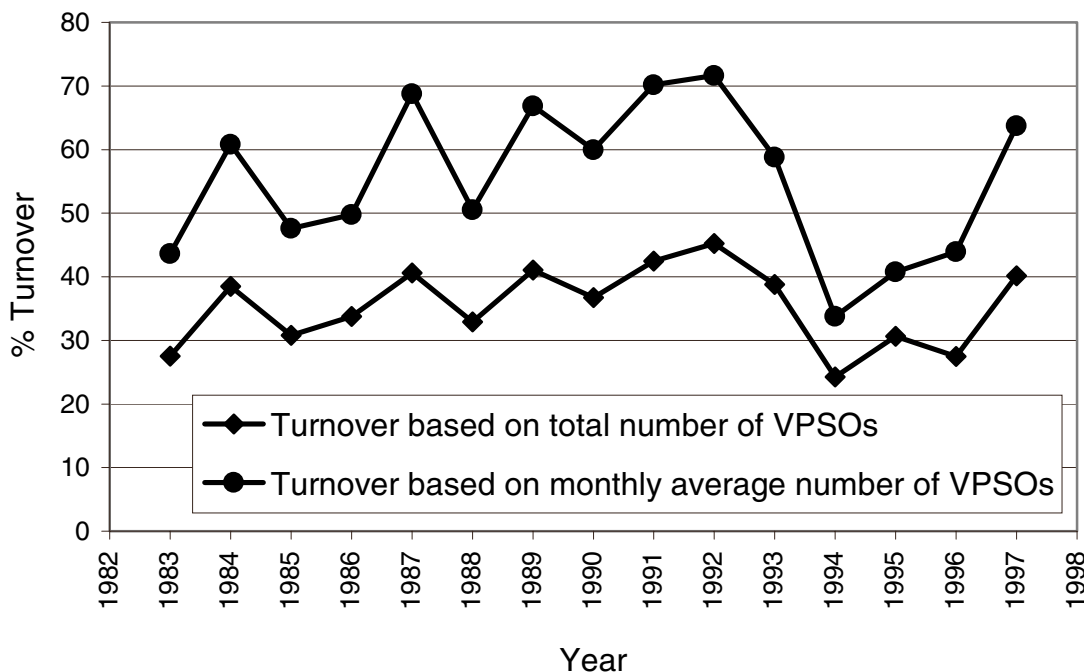
A comparison of the two different methods of measuring turnover among VPSOs demonstrates the variations in their results. Such a comparison is made in Figure 4. As is shown there, the turnover rates computed using the total number of VPSOs employed in a year are consistently lower than the turnover rates computed using the typical number of VPSOs employed at any one time in a year. Despite those differences, however, there is definitely a correspondence between the “ups” and “downs” of the two measures shown in Figure 4. As with the results presented in Table 4 and Table 5, the low point of turnover for both measures was in 1994 while the high point was in 1992. The drop-off in turnover rates in the period 1994 through 1996 seen in Table 4 and Table 5 is also apparent in Figure 4.

VPSO Turnover Compared to Turnover in Law Enforcement and Other Occupations

In order to have a better appreciation for the extreme rates of turnover in the VPSO program, it is necessary to put those rates into a comparative context. It is possible to look at how the amount of turnover in the VPSO program compares with that found among the police

elsewhere and also within other segments of the workforce. These comparisons certainly underscore the degree to which turnover is a problem in the VPSO program.

Figure 4: Yearly VPSO Turnover Rates Computed as a Percentage of the Mean Number of Positions at Mid-Month and as a Percentage of the Total Number Employed During Year, 1983 to 1997.



According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (1999), turnover among police officers is among the lowest of all occupations. Although national figures on police turnover are difficult to come by,¹¹ an examination of individual studies on police turnover certainly shows this to be true. A 1986 Police Foundation national survey of 303 municipal police departments serving cities with populations of more than 50,000 found turnover rates of 4.6 percent for male officers and 6.3 percent for female officers (Martin, 1990). The 1986 turnover rates of the 49 state police departments examined by the Police Foundation in that same survey were 2.9 percent for male officers and 8.9 percent for female officers (Martin, 1990). These turnover rates are certainly much lower than the 34 percent turnover rate in the VPSO program in that same year.

Studies of turnover at the state level also make the figures from the VPSO program seem rather high. Whipple, Oehlerking, and Del Grosso's (1991) examination of turnover in South

¹¹ LEMAS does not consider turnover, for example.

Dakota's police departments shows that the turnover rate in 1990 was 11.8 percent for all departments in the state. Broken down by city size, the turnover rate was 16.4 percent in 1991 in South Dakota jurisdictions with populations less than 10,000 population and 9.7 percent in jurisdictions with populations over 10,000 (Whipple, Oehkerling, & Del Grosso, 1991). A similar pattern has been reported for Vermont. Between 1986 and 1989 the turnover rate ranged between 11 and 14 percent in towns 6,000 or more population while in towns with populations less than 6,000 population the rate over the 4 years examined was 19.9 percent (Vermont Criminal Justice Center, 1989). Although the turnover figures from Vermont and South Dakota are high compared to the figures reported in national surveys, they are less than half that found typically in Alaska's VPSO program.

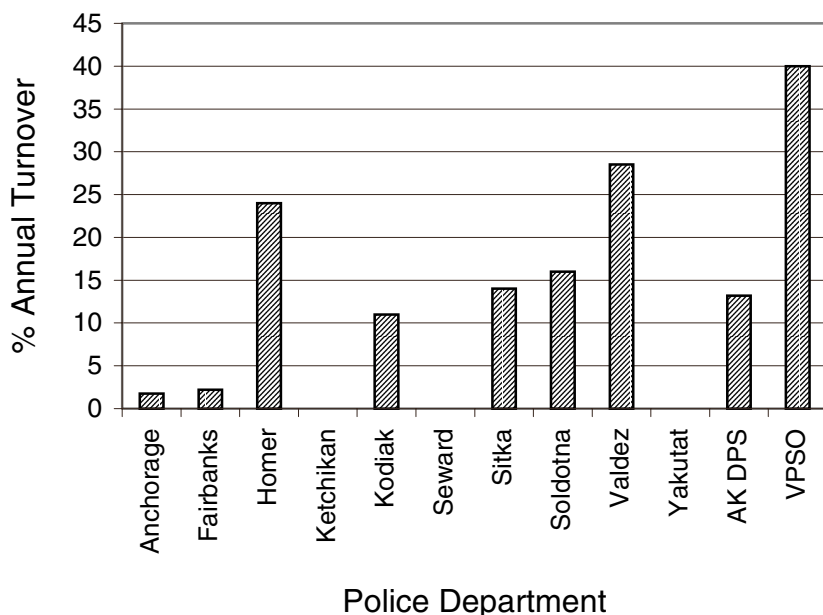
Not only do the VPSO turnover rates appear high when compared to lower-48 standards, they are also much higher than what is found in many departments across the state of Alaska. A comparison of turnover rates for the VPSO program and for a non-systematic sample of police agencies across the state for 1997 is shown in Figure 5. The data presented there were gathered specifically for this study. Turnover rates used in Figure 5 were calculated using the formula presented in Equation 2 above in which the denominator for the rate is the total number of officers employed during the year in question. As can be seen, the VPSO turnover rates are, with the exceptions of Valdez and Homer, much higher than in the other departments considered. The 40 percent rate for the VPSO program is about three times that of the Alaska Department of Public Safety (which includes the Alaska State Troopers and Alaska Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection) and roughly 20 times those of the Anchorage and Fairbanks departments.

Not only are the turnover rates of the VPSO program much higher than what is found elsewhere in law enforcement, they are also a good deal higher than many occupations outside law enforcement. Comparisons can be drawn between VPSO turnover rates and the national turnover rates of major occupational groups and industries in the public and private sectors of the economy. Comparisons of turnover rates can also be drawn between those found for the VPSO program and those found in specific occupations.

When compared to turnover in major occupational groups in the private and public sectors, VPSO turnover rates rank with the groups most commonly thought of as having high levels of attrition. The best possible source of national turnover rates for making such a

comparison is the results of the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) (Ryscavage, 1995).

Figure 5: Percentage Turnover Rate, Alaska Municipal Police Departments, Alaska Department of Public Safety, and the VPSO Program, 1997.



Using a longitudinal survey of a national sample of non-institutionalized persons aged 15 and over, SIPP captured information on the panel's labor market activities for the period October 1990 through August 1993. A portion of the survey asked respondents about their month-to-month participation in the labor force to track their movements in and out of occupations in specific industry groups. Using these movements the turnover rates for the major industry groups were calculated on a monthly basis for 1991 (Ryscavage, 1995).

A comparison of the 1991 average monthly turnover rates in the VPSO program with the figures from SIPP shows that the VPSO program had a turnover rate that was roughly two-and-a-half times that found for all occupations nationally. Across all segments of the economy, the average monthly turnover rate in 1991 in the U.S. was 7.1 percent (Ryscavage, 1995). During that same period the average monthly turnover rate in the VPSO program was 17.1 percent.

The VPSO turnover rate in 1991 was closer to that of the occupational groups of the high turnover industries reported on in the SIPP. The only industry group with a turnover rate greater than the VPSO program was the entertainment and recreation services industry which had an

average monthly turnover rate of 17.6 percent in 1991 (Ryscavage, 1995). The VPSO turnover rate was actually higher than the turnover rates in the agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industry group (at 14.4 percent), the personal services industry group (at 11.7 percent), the construction industry group (at 10.6 percent), and the retail trade industry group (at 9.8 percent) (Ryscavage, 1995). Turnover in the VPSO program in 1991 was at least three times greater than that found in the traditionally low turnover manufacturing industry group (at 4.7 percent), the transportation, communications, and public utilities group (at 4.8 percent), and the public administration industry group (also at 4.8 percent) (Ryscavage, 1995).

Aside from the Census Bureau's SIPP research, there has been little research on turnover rates at the national level across the private and public sectors of the economy. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the agency one would expect to produce such figures, left the business of measuring labor turnover in the early 1980s (Utter, 1982). However, this void in the national surveys across economic sectors has been partially filled by the study of turnover rates at the level of the specific occupation. Although nowhere representative of the entire private and public sectors of the economy, these studies of turnover in specific occupations provide additional context from which to view the high rates of turnover in the VPSO program.

Many of the studies looking at turnover in specific occupations have been conducted by and reported in industry trade publications. For example, the publication *The Internal Auditor* reported a 15-percent annual turnover rate for that occupation in 1993 (Oxner & Kusel, 1994). Subscribers to the *National Underwriter* would have read about the 12-percent turnover of employees in the life and health insurance industry in 1994 (West, 1995). Medical administrators reading *Modern Healthcare* would have found out about the 14-percent turnover rate of hospital CEOs in 1994 (Burda, 1995). *Inc.* magazine's readers would have read about the 16-percent turnover rate among the corporate sales force in 1993 (Greco, 1994). All of these turnover rates are substantially lower than what has been commonplace in the VPSO program. Perhaps only the readers of *Progressive Grocer* (1998) which reported a 31-percent turnover rate among grocery store produce department employees could understand the extent of turnover in the VPSO program.

Research from a more academic orientation has also reported turnover rates that are generally much lower than what has been found among VPSOs. Sherman (1987), for example, noted a 13-percent turnover rate for the "talent" at local television stations. Among high school

teachers job turnover is said to about 21 percent per year (Mont & Rees, 1996). Hospital nurses, a group with a large body of research regarding its attrition (Tai, Bame, & Robinson, 1998), had a reported turnover rate of 14 percent in 1991 (National Association for Health Care Recruitment, 1992). Finally, a longitudinal study sponsored by the American Bar Association reported an average of 5-percent turnover among lawyers between 1984 and 1990 (Cohen, 1999). While these selected studies by no means provide a totally representative view of turnover in the workforce at large, they do help us to see that VPSO turnover is probably much higher than it should be.

Employment Tenure in the VPSO Program

Aside from looking at turnover rates, it is possible to calculate the amount of time VPSOs are employed as an additional measure of VPSO attrition. Otherwise known as their *employment tenure*, the length of time VPSOs spend with the program is rather short. Given the high rates of turnover in the program, short periods of employment tenure are to be expected. First we can examine employment tenure within single communities. Then, because of transfers, it is possible to consider employment tenure in the VPSO program.

Based upon the date of hire and date of termination information from the list of former and current VPSOs provided to the author by AST, indicators of VPSO employee tenure in a community are shown in Table 6. Regardless of the group examined, be it the VPSOs currently serving on June 30, 1998, those serving prior to June 30, 1998, or for VPSOs serving in the program through June 30, 1998, the amount of time spent in a community is relatively short. Overall, as shown in the far right column of Table 6, more than half (50.3%) of all VPSOs who have ever served have lasted less than a year in a community. More than five out of six (83.3%) VPSOs remained in a community for three years or less. Of the VPSOs currently serving in the program as of June 30, 1998 (shown in the second column from the left in Table 6), about a third (32.7 percent) have served in a community for less than a year. As might be expected, given the 17.3 percent of current VPSOs with 5 or more years of experience, the average length of service in a community for current VPSOs as measured by the mean and median days in the program is more than twice that of all VPSOs who have served.

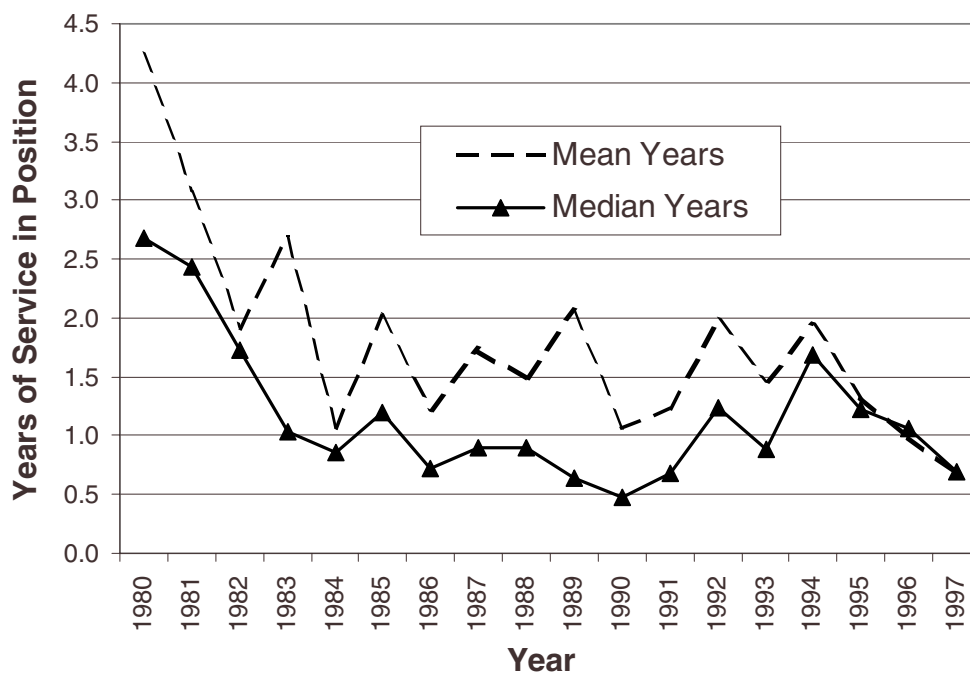
Over time, the employment tenure of VPSOs in a single community has decreased since the beginning of the program in the early 1980s. In Figure 6 the average number of years served

in a community is compared across the years of hire 1980 through 1997. Mainly a function of the “long-timer” officers hired when the program was in its infancy, the average years of service in a community among VPSOs were highest for those brought on in the early 1980s.

Table 6: Length of Service to a Community for Current VPSOs, Former VPSOs, and VPSO Program Total, 1980-1998.

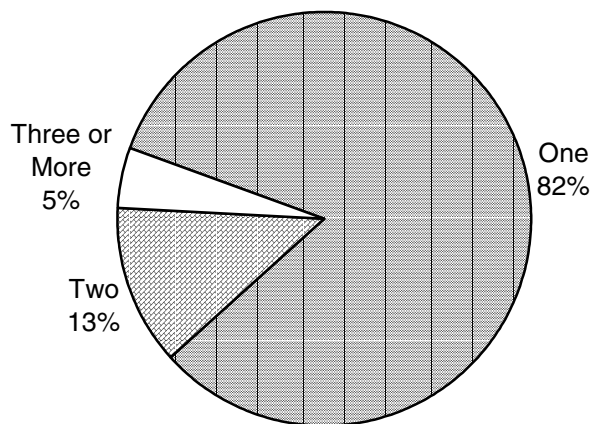
Length of Service to a Community	Percentage of VPSOs Currently Serving on June 30, 1998	Percentage of VPSOs no Longer Serving as of June 30, 1998	Percentage for Total VPSO Program Through June 30, 1998
1 Year or Less	32.7	54.2	50.3
1 Year and a day to 2 Years	24.3	22.0	22.4
2 Year and a day to 3 Years	14.3	9.8	11.1
3 Year and a day to 4 Years	4.3	5.6	5.8
4 Year and a day to 5 Years	7.1	2.5	2.6
More than 5 Years	17.3	5.8	7.7
Mean Days in Community	1448	558	621
Median Days in Community	786	322	357

Figure 6: Average Years of Service in Single Community by Year of Hire, 1980-1997.



Due to transfers, there is a bit of a difference in the length of time VPSOs spend in a community and the length of time spent with the program itself. Using the information recorded in the AST list of current and former VPSOs it is possible to calculate the number of transfers per VPSO as well as the officers' employment tenure in the VPSO program. As seen in Figure 7 about a fifth (18 percent) of all VPSOs serving in the program since its inception have held more than one position through transfer. The remainder of the VPSOs served in only one village.

Figure 7: Number of Positions Held by VPSOs, 1980-1998.



Taking into account transfers between villages, the employment tenure figures for VPSOs as a measure of how long they spend with the program are a bit longer than the typical employment tenure measured by service to a single village used above. Even these figures, however, point to a high level of attrition within the VPSO program. In Table 7 figures on the VPSOs' employment tenure measured by length of service to the program are presented. There isn't a great deal of difference between the employment tenure shown in Table 7 and that presented above in Table 6 (where employment tenure was defined by the length of service in a single village). As seen in the far right hand column of Table 7, even when transfers between villages are considered, the typical VPSO does not remain in the program for very long. More than half of VPSOs last less than a year in the program. The biggest difference resulting from taking into account the effect of transfers on employment tenure is for the VPSOs currently serving as of June 30, 1998. Shown in the left-hand column of figures in Table 7, the median length of VPSO service counting transfers (934 days) is about 22 percent greater than the median length of service in a village (786.5 days – see Table 6). Inclusion of inter-community transfers

in the calculation of employment tenure also indicates that the currently serving VPSOs have been with the program a lot longer than might be expected when using the length of service in a single community as the measure of tenure. The number of VPSOs with an employment tenure of five or more years when transfers are taken into account (33.8 percent) is nearly twice that of employee tenure calculated as length of service to one village (17.3 percent – see Table 6).

Table 7: Length of Service in the VPSO Program Including Inter-Community Transfers for Current VPSOs, Former VPSOs, and VPSO Program Total, 1980-1998.

Length of Service to VPSO Program	Percentage of VPSOs Currently Serving on June 30, 1998	Percentage of VPSOs no Longer Serving as of June 30, 1998	Percentage for Total VPSO Program Through June 30, 1998
1 Year or Less	19.1	53.7	50.5
1 Year and a day to 2 Years	20.6	21.3	21.3
2 Year and a day to 3 Years	11.8	10.6	10.7
3 Year and a day to 4 Years	5.9	5.0	5.1
4 Year and a day to 5 Years	8.8	3.2	3.7
More than 5 Years	33.8	6.2	8.7
Mean Days in Program	1638	576	673
Median Days in Program	934	330	363

When the turnover rates and employment tenure figures are taken together, a not-so-rosy picture of VPSO attrition is presented. In any given year VPSOs leave the program at rates that are much greater than what is found in police departments across the U.S. and in Alaska. In fact, the rates at which VPSOs leave the program are closest to those found in sectors of the economy more commonly associated with high turnover, including the entertainment and recreation services industry and the retail trade industry. Given the high turnover rates among the VPSOs, it should be no surprise that they don't tend to last very long in a community or in the program as a whole. Half of VPSOs don't stay in a community for a year or even make it through their first year of service.

WHY TURNOVER IS A PROBLEM

Two general negative effects of officer turnover are identified in the literature on police attrition. A primary negative effect of officer turnover is the monetary costs involved in replacing those officers that have left the organization (McIntyre, Stageberg, Repine, & Mernard,

1990). Not only are there salaries to be paid while the officer attends the academy, but there are the costs involved in providing the training. On top of those costs of training new officers are expenses resulting from the recruitment and hiring processes. The Alaska State Trooper officer in charge of VPSO training estimates that it costs approximately \$6,200 to hire, train, and equip each new VPSO.

A second negative effect of officer turnover identified in the literature is the resultant loss of officer experience (McIntyre, et. al., 1990). The successful achievement of a police organization's goals depends in part upon the experience of its employees. When officers quit, taking their experience with them, the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization suffers. This is probably not as big an issue for the VPSO program as it is for more traditional police departments because, as is shown in the above section on VPSO employment tenure, most VPSOs do not serve long enough to leave once they have become "seasoned."

Lack of Presence in a Village

Besides the monetary costs and loss of experience connected with police turnover, attrition among the VPSO often has the additional detrimental effect of leaving a village without any local public safety presence. VPSOs regularly leave their job without an immediate replacement on hand, leaving the role unfilled in the community. This makes a village vulnerable because it lacks a local individual with responsibility for providing public safety services.

The amount of time in which the role of the VPSO is unfilled in a community can be calculated using the list of former and current VPSOs provided to the author by AST. Given the cut in the number of VPSO positions and the changes in which villages get VPSOs, it is difficult to calculate for the entire program the amount of time that elapses between the departure of one VPSO from a position and the arrival of a replacement. A more realistic examination of the amount of time between VPSOs in a village can be conducted for the villages which are still served by the program. As of June 30, 1998, there were 75 VPSOs serving in 74 villages for which the amount of time that elapsed before they replaced the former VPSO can be calculated. Five of these current VPSOs were the first officers to serve in their village; four of these five could be considered "long-timers" who had served since the infancy of the program. In total,

there were 69 villages with a current VPSO on June 30, 1998 (not including the five VPSOs serving a village for the first time.)

On average, the 69 villages with VPSOs current on June 30, 1998 waited at least three months for the current VPSO to replace the former VPSO. The mean period of time without VPSO presence in the 69 villages was 290 days. Half of the 69 villages (i.e., the median number of villages) waited for a new VPSO for 68 days.

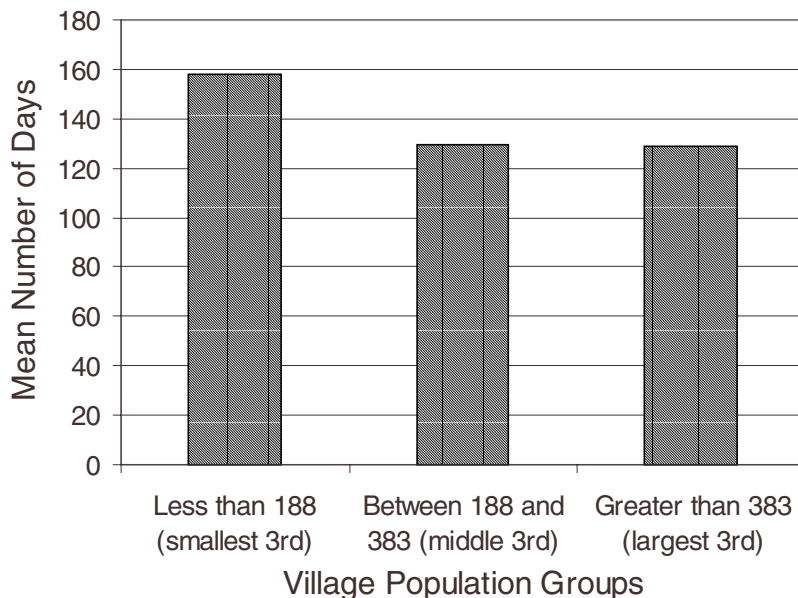
In five of these 69 villages the waiting time for a new VPSO was over 1,200 days. When the waiting times of these five villages are removed from the analysis, a more realistic view of the length of time villages went without VPSOs emerges. Of the remaining 64 villages whose wait for a new VPSO was less than two years, the mean number of days between the time the former VPSO left his or her posting and the current VPSO began serving was 138 days. Nearly 30 percent of the villages waited a month for their new VPSO. In more than half (53.6 percent) of the villages the VPSOs were replaced within 3 months. It took more than a year for about a fifth (18.8 percent) of the 64 villages to get a new VPSO. In these 64 villages, the length of time for VPSOs to be replaced was longer for those with smaller populations (see Figure 8). It took an average of 158 days for the villages with populations in 1990 of less than 188 residents (i.e., the smallest third of the villages) to have their VPSO replaced. Even the larger villages (those with more than 383 residents — the largest third of the villages), however, waited (129 days) on average to get a new VPSO.

We should be careful not to easily dismiss the importance of having VPSOs in a village. As they presently operate, the VPSOs serve in what Hippler (1982) termed a “trip-wire” function. While they are trained and well-equipped to handle the smaller problems that arise in their communities, they also broker larger emergencies for the specially-equipped state agencies (such as the Alaska State Troopers) to deal with. Without a VPSO in a village there is a lack of a central figure who can make timely appropriate arrangements in dealing with larger problems.

The lack of VPSOs in a village can certainly make the job of the state troopers much more difficult even when dealing with non-emergency situations. The amount of time troopers save when visiting a village that has a VPSO for the purpose of investigating serious offenses, while yet to be empirically quantified through time-and-task studies, must be tremendous. One state trooper related that it takes him about six times as long to solve an assault case when a village doesn’t have a VPSO compared to when it does. Having a VPSO with local knowledge

allows a trooper to deal with cases without having to find his or her way around a village of unmarked streets and houses searching for unfamiliar witnesses, victims, and suspects.

Figure 8: Average Number of Days Villages Went Without VPSO Service Prior to Service of VPSO Currently Serving on June 30, 1998 by Village Size.



Service by Untrained VPSOs

Aside from leaving villages without a VPSO, turnover in the program also leads to positions being filled for a good number of days by officers who have not completed the annual VPSO training academy. When a VPSO leaves a village, not only is there a period of time before a replacement officer can be hired and employed, there is also a period of time that the new officer will spend on the job before being trained. While it is true that some officers, especially those joining the program from the Lower 48, may have received police training prior to their posting as a VPSO, it is likely that even those officers have not received training in all the five areas of VPSO responsibility.

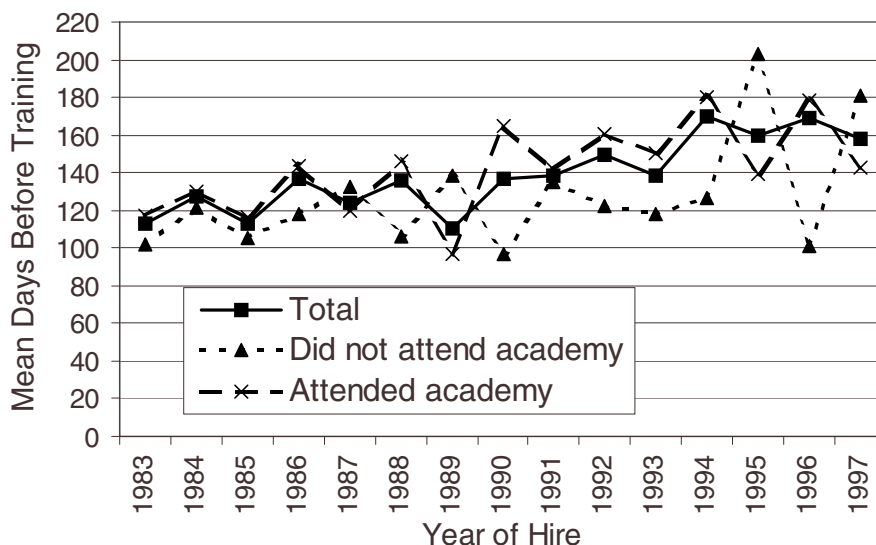
The time between when a VPSO is hired and when he or she is trained can also be determined using the AST's list of former and current VPSOs. Since the VPSO training academy is held annually, beginning the first week of the year, a reasonable measure of the number of days new VPSOs spend without being trained can be calculated by subtracting the date of hire from January 5 of the following year. For example, a VPSO hired on August 24,

1994 would work for 134 days before attending the VPSO academy beginning in the first week of January, 1995.

On average, VPSOs work between three and four months without training before attending the academy or before leaving the program. Of those hired between 1983 and 1997 the mean number of days all new VPSOs worked before getting academy training or quitting was 137 days. Half of the officers hired between 1983 and 1997 (i.e., the median number of officers) worked for 116 days without training. Of the VPSOs hired between 1983 and 1997 who did not remain with the program long enough to attend the academy, the mean number of days employed without training was 125 while the median number of days without training was 113. For VPSOs hired between 1983 and 1997 who attended the academy, the length of employment without training was higher than those for VPSOs that did not make it to the academy. Those officers attending the academy worked for a mean of 142 days and a median of 118 without receiving academy training.

Over time, there has been a gradual increase in the number of days that VPSOs spend in the program prior to attending the academy. This increase is shown in Figure 9. For VPSOs hired in 1983 an officer worked an average (mean) of 113 days prior to attending the academy or leaving the program. By 1994 VPSOs were working for an average (mean) of 170 days before either receiving training or quitting.

Figure 9: Mean Number of Days Without Training at Annual VPSO Academy for Entire Program, for VPSOs Attending Academy, and for VPSOs not Attending Academy, 1983-1997.



SUMMARY

Officer turnover was a problem that afflicted attempts to provide police and public safety services to Alaska Native villages since even before the VPSO program originated. While not as complete as what is currently available for VPSOs, available early figures regarding turnover indicate that villages were losing their police almost as fast as they could hire them. This chapter, through a thorough examination of VPSO attrition rates, has shown that officer turnover is still a problem.

Compared with what is found in other occupations and among other police departments, VPSO turnover rates are very high. While the turnover of police officers is about the lowest of all occupations, the turnover rates of VPSOs have more in common with those working in seasonal industries than they have in common with other civil servants.

This chapter also considered some of the detrimental consequences of VPSO turnover. Aside from the expenses of hiring and training, the high rates of VPSO attrition have two additional costs. Villages are often left without a public presence for months on end after a VPSO leaves the program, and it takes a considerable period of time before a replacement VPSO receives formal training.

Given all of these problems connected to VPSO attrition, it is clear that an examination of the factors associated with turnover is needed. The next chapter of this report describes the steps taken to conduct such an examination.

CHAPTER 4: MEASURING THE CORRELATES OF TURNOVER — THE VPSO TURNOVER SURVEY

Although the problem of turnover among VPSOs has been noted in a number of previous studies on the program (AKDPS, 1990; Hippler, 1982; Price Waterhouse, 1984; Sellin, 1981), none has actually examined the reasons for the high rates of attrition from an empirical standpoint. This chapter describes the efforts made in the present study to provide such an examination.

First of all, this chapter will take a look at the survey instrument (see Appendix 2) developed for the purpose of measuring factors theoretically linked to turnover generally among the police and particularly among Alaska Native police. The survey instrument is composed mainly of closed-ended questions developed from the hypotheses discussed above. To increase the ease of completion and to make possible the comparison of respondents' answers, the instrument is designed so the responses to the closed-ended questions would be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Multiple indicators of each concept will be employed to increase content validity. However, not all questions are closed-ended. A few unstructured, open-ended questions are also included in the survey instrument to allow for respondents to describe events resulting in their quitting and to explain their personal reasons for joining VPSO service. Slightly different versions of the questionnaire, primarily involving changes in verb tense, have been developed for currently employed officers and for formerly employed officers.

Finally this chapter provides a discussion of the steps taken in administering the survey to insure the completeness of the responses and to maximize the generalizability of findings.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH POLICE TURNOVER: WHY DO OFFICERS QUIT?

There are three different perspectives pertinent to any attempt to understand the factors associated with VPSO attrition. First, there is general police research which focuses upon job stress and the effects of satisfaction with salary and benefits upon police turnover. A second body of work considers police turnover as a consequence of the many problems that all rural police departments face. The third type of research looks at the difficulties of applying non-Native police arrangements in Native communities using Native employees. All of these perspectives were used in developing a survey instrument to examine the correlates of turnover in the VPSO program.

Stress and Job Satisfaction

Stress among police officers is a subject that has certainly received a great deal of attention in the police literature (e.g., Anson & Bloom, 1988; Crank & Caldero, 1991; Fell, Richard, & Wallace, 1980; Graf, 1986; Hart & Wearing., 1993; 1995; Lord, 1996; Miletich, 1990; Perrott, & Taylor, 1994; Robinson, Sigman, & Wilson, 1997; Stearns & Moore, 1993; Tang, & Hammontree, 1992; Terry, 1985). Generally, that research has examined the factors which are thought to lead to stress. Fewer studies (DeLey, 1984; McIntyre et. al., 1990) have considered police stress as a causal influence upon the turnover of police officers. Some officers in McIntyre et. al's (1990) survey of Vermont police officers, for example, said that the stress of police work or family pressures influenced their decision to leave their department. It is expected that the greater the reported job related stress is among VPSOs, the shorter their tenure in the program will be.

Four different types of questions were composed in the survey instrument in an attempt to measure the stress as it affects VPSOs. The first sets of questions measure role ambiguity and role conflict. Role ambiguity, the lack of clear, consistent information about the set of activities to be performed and the methods of their performance (Kelling & Pate, 1975) is one such possible source of stress for VPSOs. Given the limits on VPSOs' authority to use force or make felony arrests combined with their five-part task bundle, it is reasonable to expect that many would experience such role ambiguity in their jobs. The degree to which VPSOs' have experienced role ambiguity can be measured by a scale combining three Likert-type questions suggested by Kahn, et al. (1964).

The second source of stress considered in the survey instrument in terms of its effect on VPSO attrition rates is role conflict. According to Kahn, et al. (1964, p. 19), role conflict "is defined as the simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other." The differing expectations among oversight troopers, non-profit coordinators, and village government representatives present potential sources of role conflict for VPSOs. With so many "bosses" to please, it is difficult for the VPSO to know whom he or she is actually working for and what their expectations are (Marenin, 1994). A similar lack of clearly defined expectations between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the local community was said to have led to confusion and low morale among their Indian Special Constables in the 1970s (Griffiths &

Yerbury, 1984; Van Dyke & Jamont, 1980). In this study survey questions asking VPSOs about these differing expectations are used in a scale measuring role conflict as it impacts upon VPSOs.

A third set of questions was constructed to measure the VPSOs' personal physiological effects of stress. As shown by Vulcano, Barnes, and Breen (1984), police officers experience psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches, indigestion, or ulcers at a rate much higher than what is found in the general population. Likert-type questions modeled after those used by Kiev & Kohn (1979) were put to the VPSOs to gauge their experience with the physiological symptoms of stress.

The final set of questions in the survey instrument related to officer stress considers the effect of officer safety upon VPSO tenure. Not only are VPSOs the only law enforcement presence in their communities, they are also expected to do their job without a firearm. This includes being the first response to violent and hostile situations sometimes involving armed suspects. In such situations, VPSOs are expected to get uninvolved bystanders to safety, cordon off the area, and call in the Alaska State Troopers to bring the situation to an end. With a lack of roads and the unpredictable Alaskan weather, it can take the troopers many hours to respond, if not more than a day. It is therefore possible that some VPSOs would leave the program rather than have to deal with potentially dangerous situations. Two Likert-style questions were included in the survey to obtain information about the officers' perceptions that they are put into dangerous situations with the potential for injury. A series of 'yes-no' questions are also included in the survey instrument to find out about the VPSOs actual experiences with injury and dealing with armed perpetrators.

Aside from stress, the general police literature on turnover looks to job satisfaction as an factors in officers deciding to leave the occupation. The study by McIntyre, et al. (1990) of municipal police in Vermont is typical in this regard. They found that officers' dissatisfaction with salary, benefits, retirement packages, and opportunities for advancement was most often reported to be reasons for quitting (McIntyre, et al., 1990). Frustrations with departmental leadership and administrative policies were also frequently reported to be reasons the Vermont police officers gave for quitting. DeLay's (1984) comparison of turnover among Danish and American police found that turnover was lowest and job satisfaction was highest among police in Denmark while the opposite was true for officers from the U.S. A number of questions are

included in this survey instruments measuring different aspects of job satisfaction among VPSOs.

First among the questions dealing with job satisfaction are Likert-type questions dealing with VPSOs' satisfaction with their pay. Not surprisingly, research in other occupations has shown a negative relationship between satisfaction with salaries and job turnover (Motowidlo, 1983; Roberts & Chonko, 1996). Compared to the typical income for paid positions in Alaska Native villages (see Table 1 in Chapter 2) and the salaries of police officers in Alaska's larger cities, the VPSOs can be considered to be underpaid. Even with a 12 percent salary increase that became effective at the beginning of the 1999 fiscal year, only those VPSOs who have served approximately six years would earn what is typical in an Alaska Native village (see Table 8).

Table 8: VPSO Annual Salaries by Non-Profit Corporation and Years in Service, July 1, 1999.

Non-Profit Corp.	VPSO Annual Salary in Dollars									
	Start-ing	After 0.5 Years	After 1.5 Years	After 2.5 Years	After 3.5 Years	After 4.5 Years	After 5.5 Years	After 6.5 Years	After 7.5 Years	After 8.5 Years
APIA	27,283	28,647	30,080	31,584	33,163	34,821	36,562	38,390	40,310	42,325
AVCP	28,291	29,706	31,191	32,751	34,388	36,108	37,913	39,809	41,799	43,899
BBNA	27,283	28,647	30,080	31,584	33,163	34,821	36,562	38,390	40,310	42,325
CHUG	21,894	22,998	24,138	25,345	26,612	27,934	29,340	30,807	32,347	33,964
KANA	23,547	24,724	25,960	27,258	28,621	30,052	31,555	33,133	34,789	36,529
KAWA	29,096	30,551	32,079	33,683	35,367	37,135	38,992	40,942	42,989	45,138
MANI	29,353	30,821	32,362	33,890	35,679	37,463	39,336	41,303	43,368	45,536
TCC	31,310	32,875	34,519	36,245	38,057	39,960	41,958	44,056	46,259	48,571
THCC	23,547	24,724	25,960	27,258	28,621	30,052	31,555	33,133	34,789	36,529

Source: Alaska State Troopers.

A number of questions that might be thought of as objective indicators of VPSO pay are also included in the survey instrument. These 'yes-no' questions allow for a determination of whether VPSOs had to rely on welfare, food stamps and supplementary employment to support themselves and their families. As with the more subjective measures of pay satisfaction, it is reasonable to expect that those VPSOs who were not receiving enough salary and had to turn to additional means of support would be more likely to leave the program.

Another area regarding job satisfaction considered in the survey is the officers' perceptions of promotional opportunities in the VPSO program. Except for the annual pay increase that all VPSOs receive, there are currently no promotional opportunities in the program.

As long as an officer does the job, a raise is automatic. Otherwise, there is no financial incentive for a job well done. Because of the research showing a negative relationship between promotional opportunities and job turnover (Quarles, 1994), two Likert-type questions on the subject are included in the survey instrument.

The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969), an overall measure of job satisfaction was included in the questionnaires given to the sub-sample of VPSOs employed at the time the survey was administered. Widely used in management studies (Yeager, 1981), “the JDI measures five facets of job satisfaction — work, pay, promotion, supervision, and co-workers — by means of responses to adjectives and adjectival phrases. The subject responds to each item with yes, don’t know, or no depending on whether the item describes his or her job” (Johnson, Smith, & Tucker, 1982). Studies that have examined job satisfaction generally (Berg, 1991; Camp, 1994; Wright, 1993), including those that have employed the JDI (Dickter, Roznowski, & Harrison, 1996; Mallam, 1994), have found a negative relationship with turnover. It is expected that the more satisfied a VPSO is with his or her job, the more likely he or she is to remain with the program.

Difficulties of Rural Policing

There are special problems connected to the environment of rural policing that, because not generally applicable to officers working in larger departments, can make officers working in rural departments more prone to turnover. According to Weisheit, Wells, and Falcone (1995), rural officers’ work is often done alone without a police backup system to respond to calls for assistance within a reasonable amount of time. They report that the isolation and distance from assistance is seen by many rural police officers as being the worst part of their job (Weisheit, Wells, & Falcone, 1995; see also Griffiths, Saville, Wood, & Zellerer, 1995). Despite the fact that members of small rural police departments usually work by themselves covering great distances, there is a general lack of privacy in their lives and they find it difficult to remove themselves from the police officer role. As noted by a report from the IACP (1990, p. 9), “the rural or small town police officer cannot escape his role, and is often viewed by the community as a 24-hour police officer. This generates stress because the officer cannot participate in the social activities of the community as a person but is forced to be constantly identified as a police officer.” The degree to which these special problems connected to the rural policing

environment have an impact upon officer attrition is open to debate; however, the fact remains that the turnover of police officers is most acute in small departments serving the rural areas of the US. For example, the turnover rate of South Dakota police officers in 1990 was 16.4 percent for jurisdictions with populations under 10,000, compared to 9.7 percent for jurisdictions with populations over 10,000 (Whipple, Oehkerling, & Del Grosso, 1991). Likewise, McIntyre et. al. (1990, p. 13) found turnover to be the highest in the Vermont police departments with the smallest number of employees and in those towns with the smallest populations. It is for good reason that turnover is seen as “the plague of small agencies” (Hoffman, 1993).

Three different types of questions are included in the survey instrument to examine the effects of the difficulties thought to arise from the nature of rural law enforcement upon an officer’s tenure with the VPSO program. The first type of question allows for an understanding of the effect upon VPSO attrition of village expectations that officers be available at all times of the day and on all days. Four different Likert-type questions were constructed to capture the officers’ perceptions of these demands.

A second type of question constructed to examine the effects of the rural policing environment upon VPSO turnover looks at the impact of the lack of backup as an influence of attrition. While only one village served by the program had more than one VPSO posted, not all VPSOs work without the support of an additional public safety presence in the village; some villages served by the VPSO program also have VPOs. A single ‘yes-no’ question is included in the survey instrument to find out if the presence of VPOs in the village had any impact upon VPSO turnover. Two additional questions ask about the distance and the time of travel from the nearest Alaska State Trooper posting. It is expected that the VPSOs who are closer to the nearest Trooper posting would be less likely to leave the program when compared to VPSOs posted further away.

The final type of questions included in the survey to examine the difficulties of rural policing upon VPSO turnover consider the effects of occupational isolation. Given that VPSOs are usually the primary public safety presence in Alaska Native villages, one might expect that a lack of contact with their policing superiors would make them more likely to want to leave the program. Research in other occupations, especially that showing higher turnover rates among individuals on the periphery of organizational communication networks (Feeley & Barnet, 1997) and among workers who lack mentors (Scandura & Viator, 1994), lends credence to the idea that

a lack of contact with superiors (particularly the Oversight Troopers who are supposed to act as mentors to VPSOs) would lead to greater levels of turnover. Two Likert-type questions which asked about the frequency and regularity of VPSOs contact with their Oversight Troopers have been added to the questionnaire to discern isolation, and two questions are included to measure the typical length of time between VPSOs' contact with their Oversight Troopers.

Difficulties Faced By Native Police Officers

Aside from the general factors that lead to turnover among all types of police officers and the special problems connected to the provision of police services to small rural locales, there are difficulties that are specific to applying non-Native policing arrangements to Native communities using Native employees. The rejection and isolation native police officers sometimes encounter in the community, their inability to participate in subsistence activities, and their need to go against fundamental cultural precepts to fulfill the police role are additional factors likely to be associated with VPSO attrition.

Turnover among the VPSO might also originate in the isolation and rejection they sometimes feel due to having to police the very people who are their family and friends. Some observers (Marenin & Copus, 1991; Wood & Trostle, 1997) have suggested that VPSOs face internal turmoil and stress from having to enforce the law against those they have more than a passing acquaintance with. The Department of Public Safety's (AKDPS, 1990) look at the history of local rural policing in Alaska argued that the "local pressures regarding the arrest of relatives and friends" undermined the ability of VPOs to conduct their jobs with any effectiveness. A similar conclusion regarding the VPOs was reached by Angell (1978, p. 34):

As harsh as it may sound, the fundamental problem of the village police officer lies in the fact that the major village police responsibility is the manipulation of people he knows and depends upon for his own physical and psychological well-being (i.e., his family, friends, neighbors and acquaintances) so as to keep them from situations where they might hurt someone else or themselves. Further, the manipulation, to be ultimately successful, must be handled in such a manner that it doesn't create an enemy from among any of the participants.

Canadian research has also identified great personal costs paid by local Native police that have enforced the law against those they know. According to Griffiths and Yerbury (1984), many Native communities were hostile to their members that chose to become RCMP Indian Special Constables. Such individuals were often rejected and faced "numerous recorded instances in

which the Special Constables and their families had been threatened and harassed by members of the community” (Griffiths & Yerbury, 1984, p. 151; see also Murphy & Clairmont, 1996; Van Dyke & Jamont, 1980).

It is therefore reasonable to expect that many officers would have a difficult time dealing with relatives who have broken the law. Questions in the community about the officer’s family loyalty and their native identity are bound to be raised when a Native officer enforces the law against his or her own kin, which, in turn, would make the officer less likely to want to continue in his or her position. Four different Likert-style questions are included in the survey instrument to gauge the VPSOs perceptions of difficulties when having to police friends and relatives. It is expected that officers who reported difficulties enforcing the law against relatives would have shorter periods of service to the VPSO program compared to those officers who do not have such difficulties. Other questions regarding the policing of friends and family included in the questionnaire ask the VPSOs if they have ever had to arrest a relative and if so, the nature of the relationship.

The inappropriateness of the policing role in Alaska Native cultures is another possible source of turnover for the VPSOs. The internal turmoil and stress many local Native police officers have faced could also originate in their being in a role that violates core values of their people. According to Moeller (1978, .p 19):

the mores of the Iñupiat people prohibit giving an individual the authority and power to take direct steps at enforcing community standards. Tradition has dictated a system of consensus by a group of elders as the means of enforcing community standards. There is immediate conflict, then, between an individual, even with support from state or municipal law, and his village. These traditions cannot be easily ignored.

In other words, the VPSO program may have a problem retaining officers because the job entails acting in a fashion contrary to deeply-held cultural norms. Ordering another person to do something (i.e., being ‘bossy’), while often required of police officers to get their job done, is generally considered a grave social blunder among Native peoples across the north (Ross, 1992) and elsewhere (Downs, 1972). It is therefore reasonable to expect that those officers who are unable to make demands of others, a requirement of the police role, would not last as long as VPSOs as those officers who are able to do so. This ability to make demands of others was operationalized using an eight-item “directiveness” scale developed by Lorr and More (1980)

which measures an individual's "disposition and ability to lead, direct, or influence others in problematic interpersonal situations calling for initiative, decision, and/or assumption of responsibility" (p. 127). An negative relationship between an officer's score on the directiveness scale and his or her tenure in the VPSO program is expected.

An additional problem specific to Native police officers is considered in the survey. A problem that is somewhat related to their duty to remain in the community to respond to calls for service and other emergency situations, they experience difficulties in being able to hunt and fish for subsistence. The time demanded by their job is time not spent in these culturally relevant activities that are of great significance to the Alaska Native people both symbolically and economically. Three Likert-type questions measuring the difficulties officers have in being able to participate in subsistence hunting and fishing are included in the survey instrument. An inverse relationship is expected between an officer's reported difficulties in being able to participate in subsistence activities and how long an officer remains with the VPSO program.

Factors Specific to VPSO Program that are Possibly Related to Turnover

Aside from the factors that are considered in the literature on police turnover, on rural policing, and on policing of Native villages, there are a number of other factors that are specific to the VPSO program that must be considered when attempting to arrive at an understanding of the attrition rates in the program. These include the VPSOs satisfaction with their training and equipment and their motivation for joining the program. Sections of the survey instrument were devoted to examining each of these factors.

The issue of officer training has always been an important one for administrators attempting to use local Alaska Native officers to provide policing and public safety services to Alaska Native villages. This is especially true for the VPSO program. Not only are officers expected to have proficiencies in the area of law enforcement, but they are also expected to be able to fight fires, conduct search and rescue operations, and perform emergency medical services. It may be unrealistic to expect for a nine-week academy at the beginning of their careers, supplemented by annual week-long refresher training courses, to provide all the necessary skills and resources necessary. This is not to say that the training itself does not have value. VPSO training is certainly a vast improvement over training given in the VPO program. Instead, it is fair to say that it is probably impossible to train anyone sufficiently to perform all of

the tasks expected of the VPSOs. Regardless of the extent to which VPSO training actually does or does not prepare them, what is important for the purposes of examining VPSO turnover is whether the officers believe their training prepares them for the job. We would expect those VPSOs who feel unprepared to leave at much greater rates than those who feel the training did adequately prepare them. Four Likert-type questions are included in the survey instrument to find out how satisfied VPSOs are with their training and whether they feel it prepared them for their job.

Another issue regarding the VPSO program that could have an impact upon turnover is the difficulties some VPSOs have in being properly equipped. Aside from the uniforms and basic investigative tools supplied to them by the Alaska State Troopers (AKDPS, 1997, sec. 4.02), VPSOs are nowhere as well equipped as a typical municipal police officer. The provision of equipment, including fire fighting equipment and officer transportation (such as a four-wheeler or a snowmachine), is the duty of the local village government. As some villages are less organized than others, some VPSOs might go without the equipment (such as a vehicle) they need to do their job in an efficient fashion. Three Likert-type questions are included in the survey instrument to gauge the VPSOs' satisfaction with the equipment they had to do their jobs and the assistance they received in obtaining that equipment. Dissatisfied VPSOs would be expected to leave the program much quicker than those who are happy with their equipment.

A section of the survey instrument is also devoted to an examination of the reasons officers have for becoming VPSOs. These Likert-style questions are included to find out if those who see the VPSO position as nothing more than a means of financial support would leave the program at greater rates than those who join because they want a career in policing or to be able to serve their villages. It is possible, however, that those officers who became VPSOs because they saw it as a way of advancing into a career in policing might actually leave sooner than those who view the position as 'just a job.' Indeed, one of the goals of the VPSO program is to be a starting point for those officers who wish to have a career in policing outside of village Alaska. According to the *VPSO Field Manual*, "part of the conceptual design of the VPSO Program is to provide a long-term career ladder for the rural, often Native, individual seeking advancement in the public safety field" (AKDPS, 1997, sec. 1.02). Efforts to meet this program goal may, in fact, contribute to the turnover problem.

Other Questions Included in the Survey

Besides those questions already looked at, other sets of questions have been included in the survey to arrive at an explanation of VPSO turnover. One set of questions attempts to determine if VPSOs felt that they were supported by the community and whether the village appreciated the job they were doing. We would expect that those officers who felt supported and appreciated would be less likely to leave the VPSO program. Three different Likert-style questions are used to measure the officers' perception of community support and gratitude. One question asks if the officer feels the community supported him or her. A second question asks the officer if people let him or her know that they appreciate the job he or she is doing. However, because it is improper in many Native cultures to outwardly express appreciation (Ross, 1992), some officers might report that village residents did not express their appreciation even though they might have been thankful for the job the VPSO was doing. In order to get around this problem, a third question in this set asks if people expressed their appreciation in a more culturally appropriate way by telling the officer they want him or her to continue to be a VPSO.

The second set of questions seeks to gather general demographic information about the VPSOs. Questions regarding age, sex, marital status, and education, all of which have been shown to have an influence upon turnover in other occupations (Monks & Pizer, 1998), are included in the survey. The survey also asks whether the officer is Alaska Native or non-Native. Although the VPSO program was originally designed as a way for Alaska Native villages to police themselves with local residents, a number of villages use non-Native officers originally from outside the community to serve as VPSO. In the present study, slightly more than one-third (37 %) of VPSOs reported non-Native racial heritage. Given the high turnover that has plagued prior efforts to employ Alaska Natives as police officers, and considering the comparatively higher turnover rates of aboriginal employees reported in other occupations (Hobart, 1982; Lane & Thomas, 1987), it is expected Alaska Natives would spend less time as VPSO compared to non-Native officers.

Apart from the questions designed to gather information for the purposes of explaining VPSO turnover, the survey instruments include some other questions allowing for a follow-up of those VPSOs who left the program as well as for an examination of the policing styles of those VPSOs in the program at the time of the survey. The follow-up questions included in the survey

instrument presented to the former VPSOs provide information on their employment experience after leaving the program as well as explore the reasons they had for no longer being a VPSO. The questions asked of the currently serving VPSOs, taken from a survey of Canadian Tribal Police (Murphy & Clairmont, 1996), are devoted to understanding the officers' perspectives on the role of the police and the methods they employ in serving their villages.

Prior to its administration, the survey instrument was checked for conceptual soundness and assurance that the questions could be understood and would be considered appropriate by potential respondents. Draft copies of the survey were sent to the regional non-profit corporation VPSO coordinators for their comments on the form and content of the questions. The draft of the survey was also examined by members of the State Troopers affiliated with the VPSO program. Both the non-profit coordinators and the troopers suggested questions regarding the area of satisfaction with housing and regarding the VPSO occasional reliance upon welfare and food stamps, both topics which needed to be considered.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT ADMINISTRATION

The survey instrument used in the present study was designed to be administered to the former and currently serving VPSOs through the mail. Compared with other methods of survey administration, a mail survey will provide the most cost-effective way of gathering the views of current and former VPSOs across the state of Alaska. Attempts were made to counteract low response rates, the major difficulty associated with mail surveys, by the use of a letter of introduction which specifies the importance of the study and guarantees anonymity and confidentiality of responses, by the provision of a self-addressed stamped envelope for the return of the survey instrument, and by the encouragement of Oversight Troopers and the non-profit corporations' VPSO Coordinators. Follow-up reminder letters to non-respondents were also sent in an attempt to boost the response rate. Special efforts were made to encourage responses from the former VPSOs because it was expected that they would be less interested in completing the questionnaire. In addition to the measures taken to boost the response rate of the currently serving VPSOs, the former VPSOs were offered \$10 as incentive to participate. To further make the completion of the survey more attractive, both current and former VPSOs were offered a chance to win a \$500 gift certificate to Wal-Mart for their response.

Efforts to get surveys to the former VPSOs began with information provided to the researchers by the State Troopers. According to the AST list of former VPSOs, 130 officers were identified as leaving the program in the four-year period, June 30, 1994 through June 30, 1998. Due to a lack of a current list of contact information, it was necessary to track down each of the former VPSOs individually. A number of methods were used to locate these 130 former VPSOs. First of all, the list of recipients of the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend was consulted. The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend is a unique program that allows for Alaska residents to share in the wealth generated by oil development in the state. Since 1982, Alaska residents who have lived in the state for a calendar year or more have been eligible to receive a dividend from the earnings of the fund. In 1999, for instance, every eligible man, woman, and child in Alaska will receive a dividend check worth about \$1,700. Given the large amount of money available, nearly all Alaskans take advantage of the program. The list of names and addresses of recipients in 1998 of the dividend were checked to find the addresses of the former VPSOs. Other methods were used to confirm the Permanent Fund information and to locate those VPSOs not listed in that record. The regional non-profit corporations were contacted to obtain the last address they had for their former VPSOs. Searches were also conducted in local telephone directories and public internet databases and the assistance of the 1-800-U.S.SEARCH firm was obtained for particularly-difficult-to-locate ex-officers. Confirmed addresses for a total of 118 former VPSOs were obtained using this combination of methods. When these 118 individuals were contacted prior to mailing the survey instrument, it was learned that six had returned to the VPSO program, two were deceased, and one was never actually hired to be a VPSO. As a result, a total of 109 surveys were mailed out to former VPSOs.

The surveys were mailed out to the former VPSOs during the first week of November 1998. Six weeks after that first mailing, when 46 completed surveys had been returned, a reminder letter was sent to non-respondents asking for survey completion. The follow-up letter resulted in an additional six surveys returned. A second reminder letter was sent to non-respondents in mid-January 1999. No additional surveys were completed and returned after the second reminder letter. As was expected, the response rate for the former VPSOs was rather low. All together, a total of 52 surveys out of the 109 surveys originally mailed were completed and returned, for a response rate of 48 percent for the former VPSOs.

The administration of the surveys to the 75 officers who were currently serving in the VPSO program was considerably less difficult, resulting in a much higher response rate. A portion of the surveys, roughly half, were administered at one of two regional training sessions held in October 1998. The remainder of the surveys were mailed to the current VPSOs at the beginning of November 1998. Six weeks after the initial mailing a total of 52 surveys had been completed by current VPSOs. A reminder letter was sent to the current VPSOs in mid-December 1998 which, when combined with follow-up telephone calls, resulted in a total of 61 surveys being completed and returned by the current VPSOs. These methods of survey administration resulted in a very high response rate of 81 percent for those VPSOs that were currently in the program. The high response rate of the current VPSOs combined with that of the former VPSOs resulted in an overall response rate of 61 percent.

Given the relatively low response rates of the former VPSOs, efforts were made to understand the extent to which non-response bias might effect the results of the study. Telephone interviews using a shortened version of the questionnaire were conducted with nine former VPSOs who did not complete a mail survey to understand the differences between those who completed the survey and those who failed to do so. A comparison of demographic information from these two groups is shown in Table 9.

For the most part, as shown in Table 9, the former VPSOs who completed and returned a survey by mail are much like those former VPSOs who failed to complete the survey and were instead contacted over the telephone. Although the former VPSOs who did not return a survey were younger, spent less time with the VPSO program, were more likely to be male, married, have some college education, and to have been fired from the program, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on these measures.

However, there is one major difference between the groups that could possibly put the representativeness of the survey results in question. As seen in Table 9, former VPSOs from an Alaska Native background were much less likely to have completed and returned a survey; the differences for former VPSOs raised in an Alaska Native village were statistically significant at the .05 level. It is difficult to ascertain the degree to which Alaska Native non-response causes problems with generalizing the findings of the report to all VPSOs (both Alaska Native and non-Native). There is no way of knowing the proportion of Alaska Native and non-Native officers that did not respond to the survey because information on which VPSOs are Alaska

Native was not made available to the researcher by the State Troopers.¹² It is possible that it is an aberration that eight out of the nine former VPSOs surveyed by telephone are Alaska Native and that if that pool was expanded, or if non-responding VPSOs were contacted, the proportion would be much less.

Table 9: Comparison of Former VPSO Mail Survey Respondents with a Sub-Sample of Former VPSOs Questioned By Telephone.

Attribute	Survey Administration Method		χ^2 Test		
	Via Mail	Via Telephone	Value	df	Significance
Percent Male	91.8	100.0	.789	1	.374
Percent Married	55.8	77.8	1.536	1	.215
Percent Some College	53.8	66.7	.511	1	.475
Percent Completed Academy	67.3	66.7	.001	1	.970
Percent Fired From Program	9.6	22.2	1.200	1	.273
Percent Alaska Native	59.6	88.9	2.851	1	.091
Percent Raised in Alaska Native Village	48.1	88.9	5.146	1	.023
	Survey Administration Method		<i>t</i> Test		
	Via Mail	Via Telephone	Value	df	Significance
Mean Days Worked in Latest VPSO Position	833.6	618.0	.649	59	.519
Mean Age in Years At Start of Latest Position	32.5	29.5	.993	59	.325

Based upon the information available to the researcher, the best way to understand the degree to which the results of the study are biased by the non-response of former VPSOs that are Alaska Native is through a comparison of the survey responses of those former VPSOs who responded to the survey with those of former VPSOs who were contacted after the fact by telephone. This comparison is made below. The differences between the two groups of former

¹² In the proposal for this project the researcher originally intended to examine VPSO personnel files held in the office of the Alaska State Troopers officer in charge of the VPSO program. However, because of concerns about privacy and confidentiality and because under Alaska Statutes the VPSOs are not employees of the state, the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety decided to deny the researcher access to those files. His decision overruled the officer in charge of the VPSO program who had originally agreed to let the researcher access that personnel information. After this setback, an attempt was made to get the personnel file information from the regional non-profit corporations' VPSO Coordinators. This attempt was also unsuccessful. Of the nine corporations, two coordinators directly refused the researcher's request, one coordinator said that the VPSO files were being audited and therefore were unavailable, one coordinator provided the researcher with a letter granting access to the AST files but no other information, three coordinators, citing time constraints, only provided information for locating the former VPSOs, and the other two coordinators provided the information as requested. A copy of the form for each of the former VPSOs sent to the corporation coordinators is shown in Appendix 3.

Alaska Native officers on measures related to their motivation for becoming a VPSO, their satisfaction with VPSO pay, their difficulties in dealing with relatives, their views of community support and expectations, and their opinions regarding VPSO retirement benefits are explored in Table 10. There were only a few statistically significant differences between the two groups on these measures. Those surveyed by telephone were much less likely to agree that they were motivated to become a VPSO because they wanted to move to and work in rural Alaska, less likely to agree with the statement that VPSOs are not paid very well, more likely to agree that they were supported by the village when a VPSO, and more likely to say that they would have remained in the program had the retirement benefits been better. In Table 11 the differences between the two groups of former Alaska Native officers on measures related to officer safety, service in a home village, post-VPSO employment, length of service and reason for separation, and officer demographic characteristics are considered. Although there are some divergence between the two groups on these measures, none of the differences on the 19 variables were statistically significant. All together, based on the findings reported in Table 10 and Table 11, there appear to be few discernable differences between the Alaska Native former VPSOs who returned a survey and those who did not. Given these minor differences between the responses, we are fairly safe to presume that the overall findings are applicable to all VPSOs be they Alaska Native or non-Native. The next chapter of this will provide a full description of the responses for all VPSOs surveyed for the study.

Table 10: Comparison of Alaska Native Former VPSO Mail Survey Respondents (n = 31) with a Sub-Sample of Alaska Native Former VPSOs Questioned By Telephone (n = 8) on Variables Related to Motivation to Become a VPSO, Satisfaction with Pay, Relatives, Community Support and Expectations, and Retirement Benefits.

Survey Question by Topic	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing	
	Surveyed via Mail	Surveyed via Telephone
<u><i>Motivation: I became a VPSO because...</i></u>		
Good job to start career in law enforcement	83.8	87.5
Village needed someone to do job	74.2	75.0
I needed a job	45.2	37.5
Good way to earn money for subsistence	48.7	37.5
I wanted to move to and live in rural Alaska	30.0	0.0*
I thought it would be an interesting job	61.3	62.5
<u><i>Pay: As a VPSO...</i></u>		
I was not paid very well	90.3	62.5*
I earned more than others in village	12.9	12.5
I had no problem 'making ends meet'	19.3	62.5
I was paid much less than job is worth	93.6	75.0
<u><i>Relatives: When I was a VPSO...</i></u>		
I was not pressured by my relatives to be lenient toward them	58.1	37.5
It was difficult enforcing law against my relatives	45.2	37.5
<u><i>Support and Expectations: The community...</i></u>		
Supported me while I was a VPSO	41.9	87.5*
Expected me to be on duty 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week	70.6	100.0
<u><i>Retirement Benefits</i></u>		
I would have remained a VPSO had the retirement benefits been better	42.0	75.0*
The VPSO retirement benefits are very poor	71.0	62.5

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Table 11: Comparison of Alaska Native Former VPSO Mail Survey Respondents (n = 31) with a Sub-Sample of Alaska Native Former VPSOs Questioned By Telephone (n = 8) on Variables Related to Safety, Policing Relatives, Post VPSO Employment, Job Related Attributes, and Other Personal Information.

Attribute	Survey Administration Method	
	Via Mail	Via Telephone
<i><u>Safety:</u></i>		
Percent Injured Making Arrest	41.9	37.5
Percent Requiring Medical Attention for Injuries Received When Making an Arrest	22.5	12.5
Percent Responding to Perpetrator Armed with a Firearm	67.7	50.0
Percent Responding to Armed Perpetrator who Fired Shots	22.5	12.5
<i><u>Policing Relatives:</u></i>		
Percent who were VPSO in Home Village	61.3	50.0
Percent who were Related to Village Residents	84.6	100.0
Percent Arresting a Relative	69.2	75.0
Percent Arresting an Immediate Family Member	32.3	12.5
<i><u>Post VPSO Employment:</u></i>		
Percent Earning More Money in Next Job	60.0	85.7
Percent Finding New Job in 1 Month or Less	51.6	71.4
Percent Finding New Job in Law Enforcement Field	30.0	37.5
<i><u>Job Related Attributes:</u></i>		
Percent Fired from VPSO Position	9.7	25.0
Percent Attended VPSO Academy	71.0	62.5
Mean Age in Years at Start of Latest VPSO Position	32.2	28.4
Mean Days Worked in Latest VPSO Position	795.7	563.1
<i><u>Other:</u></i>		
Percent Male	90.0	100.0
Percent Married	58.1	75.0
Percent with More than High School Education	48.4	62.5
Percent Raised in an Alaska Native Village	74.2	100.0

Note: None of the differences between the two groups were statistically significant at the .05 level.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS OF THE VPSO TURNOVER SURVEY — DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

This chapter examines the results of the 113 surveys returned by the current and former VPSOs. The responses to all of the questions asked of the VPSOs that were no longer in the program at the time the survey was administered are considered below.¹³ In the next chapter those responses will be used to develop variables that will help to understand some of the reasons for VPSO turnover. While not all variables will be important in helping to understand turnover in the program, the results presented in this chapter still provide important insights into a unique group of individuals who are expected to do what some might consider to be a thankless job under trying circumstances.

Question by question, the results are presented in tabular format below. Each table looks at the responses to each question (1) as a proportion of all VPSOs surveyed, (2) as a comparison of the responses of Alaska Native officers versus non-Native officers, and (3) as a comparison of the officers who had served two or more years in the program at the time the data were analyzed versus those officers who had served less than two years. The responses of Alaska Native and non-Native officers are compared because it allows for an assessment of the differences between officers from dissimilar cultural backgrounds in terms of their views of VPSO service. This comparison is also made because preliminary analyses of the data, conducted prior to when all the surveys had been returned, indicated that being an Alaska Native put a VPSO at a much greater risk of leaving the program compared to non-Native officers (Wood, 1999). In order to understand the differences in viewpoints between officers who are relatively new to the program and those who have or had served a greater amount of time, the tables below compare the responses of the VPSOs who had served more than two years in the program as of the end of August, 1999 with those of officers serving less two years then. The two-year time point serves as a convenient cutoff with which to group the officers for comparative purposes because roughly half (44.3%) of the officers surveyed had served for two years or less when the data were analyzed.

The presentation of the results in this chapter follows the path of career attitudes for the VPSO position from motivation for becoming a VPSO through to views on VPSO retirement

¹³ The responses to questions asked of VPSOs that were currently serving when the survey was administered will be considered in a later report.

benefits. Along the way this chapter will consider the officers' perceptions on training, salaries, housing, stress, officer safety, contact with Oversight Troopers, demands of duty, equipment, dealing with relatives, and village support. It will also look at the circumstances under which officers leave the program as well as some general demographic information on the officers. To begin with, the first section of this chapter examines the officers' perceptions of the VPSO career including their motivations for becoming an officer and their views of the promotional opportunities available to VPSOs.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE VPSO CAREER

The first questions in the survey dealt with the reasons individuals might have had for becoming a VPSO. As shown in Table 12, among all officers, both Alaska Native and non-Native, the most frequent agreement for all of the questions dealing with motivations for becoming a VPSO was with the statement that the program was a good place to start a career in law enforcement. From the standpoint of the VPSO program administrators, this finding is significant because one of the stated goals of the program is that it should serve as a starting point for Alaska Natives who wish to pursue a career in policing or other public safety services beyond being a VPSO. The second most frequent agreement for all officers was with the statement that they became a VPSO because their village needed one. Also, more than half of the officers surveyed agreed with the statement that they became a VPSO because it seemed to be an interesting job.

In the comparisons between Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs made in Table 12, there were statistically significant differences for the number of officers agreeing that they became a VPSO because their village needed one and for the number of officers agreeing that they became VPSOs because they thought it would be a good way to earn money to support subsistence activities. The only statistically significant difference between officers serving more or less than two years in the program was for the statement regarding becoming a VPSO because it was a good place to start a career in law enforcement; significantly fewer VPSOs who have served more than two years in the program agreed with that statement.

Table 12: Agreement with Statements Regarding Motivations for Becoming a VPSO for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

I became a VPSO because ...	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Good Job to Start a Career in Law Enforcement	78.9	80.0	78.3	83.7	75.0*
I Needed a Job	36.9	30.0	40.8	36.7	37.1
The Village Needed VPSO	60.0	28.2	77.5*	62.5	58.1
Good Way to Earn Money For Subsistence	23.6	5.1	33.8*	29.2	19.4
To Move to Alaska	29.1	40.0	22.2	31.9	26.8
Interesting Job	56.8	63.4	52.9	55.1	58.1

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

The officers were also asked a pair of questions about the promotional opportunities available to VPSOs. The results of these questions are mixed. On the one hand, few officers were happy about VPSO promotional opportunities; about one-third (31.3%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were satisfied with the opportunities for promotion available to VPSOs. However, only a minority (44.%) of VPSOs felt that the position was a ‘dead end’ job. When compared to non-Native officers, the Alaska Native officers surveyed appeared to be more satisfied with the promotional opportunities that were available in the position. About 20 percent fewer Alaska Native VPSOs thought that the position was a ‘dead end’ job while 16 percent more Alaska Native officers said they were satisfied with the opportunities for promotion. This latter difference was statistically significant. The differences on these two measures for VPSOs serving more or fewer than two years in the position were negligible.

Table 13: Perceptions of Opportunities for Promotion for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Promotion	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Satisfied with promotional opportunities	31.3	21.4	37.1*	29.2	32.8
VPSO is “dead end” job	44.6	57.1	37.1	39.6	48.4

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

TRAINING

The next group of questions in the survey asked about the officers views on VPSO training. Based upon the proportion of officers agreeing with statements regarding their satisfaction with, and perceptions of the adequacy of, VPSO training, it appears as though VPSOs are generally satisfied with their training (Table 3). Although more than half of the VPSOs surveyed agreed with statements that they are well trained and that the academy prepared them for the job, roughly two-thirds of VPSOs felt that the training did not prepare them for many things they do in their job. However, only about a third of VPSOs were dissatisfied with VPSO training overall, and this proportion was the same for those officers who had attended the academy and those who had not.

Table 14: Agreement with Statements Regarding Adequacy of VPSO Training for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Opinions on VPSO Training	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
I'm well trained	58.9	61.0	57.7	42.9	71.4*
Training did not prepare me for many things VPSOs do	58.6	69.0	52.2	57.4	59.4
The academy prepared me for the job (Academy Attendees Only)	69.0	60.0	73.7	66.7	70.0
I am not satisfied with VPSO training	32.7	50.0	22.1*	37.0	29.7
I am satisfied with VPSO training (Academy Attendees Only)	31.8	53.3	20.7*	40.7	27.9

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Compared to their non-Native counterparts, Alaska Native VPSOs were generally more satisfied with their training and felt they were well prepared. For example, only one out of five (22.1%) Alaska Native VPSOs said that they were not satisfied with the training, compared to half of the non-Native VPSOs. The officers who had served two years or more reported being much more satisfied with VPSO training compared to those who had served less than two years.

In fact, there was a statistically significant difference between these two groups in terms of whether the officer felt like he or she was well trained for the job.

SALARY AND HOUSING

A third area of the survey asked VPSOs about their feelings regarding their pay. Not surprisingly -as if workers in any occupation are particularly satisfied with their salaries- the VPSOs surveyed overwhelmingly thought that they were underpaid. As shown in Table 15, more than five out of six (84.1%) current and former officers agreed that VPSOs are not paid very well while more than nine out of ten (92.9%) officers agreed with the statement that VPSOs earn much less than the job is worth. Not only did the officers believe that they were not paid very well, but they also felt that they were paid less compared to others in the village. Only one out of six (16.1%) officers agreed with the statement that VPSOs earn more than others in the village or villages they currently or formerly served. Only about a third (29.5%) of current and former VPSOs agreed with the statement that they had no problems making ends meet on their VPSO salary.

Table 15: Agreement with Statements Regarding VPSO Pay for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Opinions on VPSO Pay	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Not Paid Very Well	84.1	88.1	81.7	83.7	84.4
More Than Others in Village	16.1	19.0	14.3	25.0	9.4
No Prob. Make Ends Meet	29.5	42.9	21.4*	31.3	28.1
Much Less Than Job Worth	92.9	95.2	91.4	91.7	93.8

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

For the most part, there were few differences on opinions about pay between Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs and between VPSOs with fewer or more than two years of service. The only statistically significant difference shown in Table 15 is between Alaska Native and non-Native officers regarding the question of whether they had problems making ends meet on a VPSO salary. About two out of five (42.9%) non-Native VPSOs reported no problems

making ends meet on their VPSO salary, while about half as many (21.4%) Alaska Native VPSOs reported a lack of such problems.

Perhaps because of their difficulties making ends meet on a VPSO salary, a number of officers report relying on other sources of financial support. As shown in Table 16, more than one-fifth (21.6%) of the officers reported using food stamps while a VPSO; nearly half (48.2%) have taken other jobs in addition to their VPSO service; and eight percent reported receiving some sort of welfare assistance. Overall, more than three out of five (60.4%) of the VPSOs reported using at least one of these methods of supplementing their VPSO salaries. There was a statistically significant difference between the proportion of Alaska Natives and non-Natives who reported using food stamps to support their incomes. The 35 percent difference in the proportion of VPSOs who had served for more than two years versus those who had served for less than two years in terms of taking other jobs for supplementary income was also statistically significant.

Table 16: Proportion of VPSOs Reporting Other Sources of Financial Support while Serving as a VPSO for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Type of Other Sources of Financial Support	Percent Reporting Use of Other Income Sources				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Used Food Stamps When VPSO	21.6	2.4	32.9*	26.5	17.7
Taken Other Job When VPSO	48.2	48.8	47.9	28.6	63.5*
Received Welfare When VPSO	8.0	4.9	9.9	8.2	7.9

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

The survey also asked questions to solicit the former and current VPSOs viewpoints about the quality and expense of their housing. Although a slim majority (51.3%) of VPSOs were satisfied with the quality of their housing, only a quarter (26.1 %) of the VPSOs felt that their housing was in poorer condition compared to other housing available in the village (see Table 17).

Table 17: Agreement with Statements Regarding Housing Quality and Expense for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statements About VPSO Housing	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Housing is very expensive	59.5	53.7	62.9	41.7	73.0*
I pay more than others in the village	48.6	48.8	48.6	52.1	46.0
In poor condition compared to other village housing	26.1	19.5	30.0	18.4	32.3
Satisfied with quality of housing	51.3	52.4	50.7	44.9	56.3

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

On both subjective and objective measures of housing costs, VPSOs report paying a lot for a place to live. A majority (59.8%) of the VPSOs had the impression that their housing costs were very expensive while, a slightly smaller proportion (48.9%) believed that they were paying more for their housing compared to others in the village (see Table 17). Based upon a more objective measure of housing costs — the proportion of an individual’s income that goes toward shelter — it would appear that VPSOs do pay a lot for a place to live. As shown in Table 18, nearly two thirds (63.3%) of the VPSOs surveyed said that they spent more than one-third of their income on housing. On a comparative note: there is a tremendous difference in the perceptions of housing costs between those who had served greater or fewer than two years as a VPSO. Somewhat surprisingly, the officers who had served for more than two years were about 31 percent more likely to say that housing is very expensive (see Table 17) and were about 18 percent more likely to say that they spent more than a third of their income on housing (see Table 18).

The rate of home ownership among VPSOs, as seen in Table 18, is rather low. Overall, only about a quarter (27.9%) of VPSOs lived in housing that they themselves owned. The difference in home ownership between Alaska Native and non-Native officers was statistically significant with one-third (33.8%) of Alaska Native VPSOs owning their own homes versus about a sixth (17.5%) of non-Native VPSOs. A comparison between the officers’ perceptions of housing costs and quality based upon their status as a home is drawn in Table 19. In terms of housing expenses, there were no differences between the VPSOs who owned their own homes

versus those who had other living arrangements while serving in the program. There are, however, major differences in the perceptions of housing quality held by those who owned their own homes compared to those who rented, lived with relatives, or lived in free housing provided by the village. Those VPSOs who owned their own homes were much more likely to be satisfied with the quality of their housing. They were 36 percent more likely to agree with the statement that they were satisfied with the quality of their housing and nearly 24 percent more likely to disagree with the statement that their housing was in poor condition when compared to the rest of the village. Both of these relationships were statistically significant.

Table 18: Proportion of VPSOs Reporting High Relative Housing Costs and Home Ownership while Serving as a VPSO for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Housing	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
More than one-third of income goes to housing	63.3	61.0	64.7	53.1	71.7*
Lives (or lived) in home that officer owns	27.9	17.5	33.8*	16.7	36.5

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Table 19: Comparison of VPSOs Perceptions of Housing Costs and Quality by Home Ownership Status.

Statement Regarding Housing	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement		
	All VPSOs	Owned Home	Rented, Live With Relatives, or Live in Free Village Housing
Housing is very expensive	59.5	53.3	62.0
I pay more than others in the village	48.6	36.7	53.2
More than one-third of income goes to housing	63.3	61.3	63.6
In poor condition compared to other village housing	26.1	9.7	33.3*
Satisfied with quality of housing	51.3	77.4	41.3*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

STRESS AND OFFICER SAFETY

The next group of questions considered in the survey are those that looked at stress in the lives of officers during their VPSO service. Four different sets of questions were used in the survey. Two sets of questions, those dealing with role ambiguity and role conflict, attempted to measure the sources of stress felt by VPSOs. The third set of questions provided measures of the VPSOs' experience with the physiological effects of stress. A final set of questions related to officer stress looked at the officers' experiences in being placed in dangerous situations while doing their jobs.

Based upon the three questions in the survey about role ambiguity (which was defined as the lack of clear and consistent information about the set of activities to be performed by the VPSO and the methods of their performance (Kelling & Pate, 1975)), it would appear that the majority of VPSOs have a good understanding about the limits of their authority and about others' expectations about their duties. As shown in Table 20, about two-thirds of all VPSOs surveyed were always clear about what they had to do as a VPSO and about the limits of their authority. A slightly smaller majority of VPSOs (54%) felt that they were always clear about others' expectations of them. From a comparative standpoint, the Alaska Native officers and the officers who have served for more than two years were more likely to report being clear about what they had to do on the job, about the limits of their authority, and about others' expectations of them.

Table 20: Agreement with Statements Regarding Sources of Role Ambiguity for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Sources of Role Ambiguity	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
I am always clear about what to do as a VPSO	62.8	50.0	70.4	53.1	70.3
I am always clear about the limits of my authority	66.4	52.4	74.6*	51.0	78.1*
I am always clear about peoples' expectations of me	54.0	47.6	57.7	44.9	60.9

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Although it was greater for some sources, many of the VPSOs surveyed for this study reported experiencing the clash of expectations that is said to be the basis of stress caused by role conflict. Ninety percent of the officers agreed with the statement that others have differing opinions of how they should be doing their job (see Table 21). Roughly two-thirds (67.6%) of the VPSOs reported a difference between what was expected of them by the Troopers and what was expected of them by the village they were serving. Less difference with expectations between the village and the regional non-profit coordinators and between the Troopers and the regional non-profit coordinators was perceived. Slightly more than two out of five VPSOs (44.1%) said that the expectations of the regional non-profit coordinators often differed from those of the village while about a third (36.0%) felt that the expectations of the Troopers often differed from those of the regional non-profit coordinators. The differences between Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs and between VPSOs serving for more or for less than two years on the job on all of these sources of role conflict were negligible (see Table 21).

Table 21: Agreement with Statements Regarding Sources of Role Conflict for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Sources of Role Conflict	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Others have different opinions of how to do job	90.2	95.2	87.1	89.6	90.6
Often there are differences between what the village and Troopers tell me to do	67.6	61.9	71.0	63.8	70.3
Often there are differences between what the village and the non-profit tell me to do	44.1	45.2	43.5	42.6	45.3
Often there are differences between what the non-profit and the Troopers tell me to do	36.0	38.1	34.8	33.3	38.1

Many of the VPSOs surveyed for this report also reported adverse physiological effects because of their job. Difficulties with sleep and in being able to relax were the most prevalent of these effects. As shown in Table 22, more than half of the VPSOs said that they had trouble

sleeping because of the job (56.4%) and a similar proportion reported having a difficult time relaxing because of the job (59.8%). Slightly fewer VPSOs reported actual physical ailments due to their VPSO position. About two out of five (41.1%) VPSOs surveyed said that their health was adversely affected because of their job while a similar proportion (44.6) reported suffering headaches because of their job (see Table 22). As with the measures of role conflict, there were few discernable differences between the responses of Alaska Native VPSOs and those of their non-Native counterparts and between the responses of VPSOs who had served less than two years and those who had served for more than two years.

Table 22: Agreement with Statements Regarding Effects of VPSO Position Upon Physical Health for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

VPSOs Agreeing They Had	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non- Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Trouble sleeping because of job	56.4	56.1	56.5	66.7	48.4
Health adversely affected because of job	41.1	38.1	42.9	35.4	45.3
Difficulty relaxing because of job	59.8	59.5	60.0	56.3	62.5
Suffer headaches because of job	44.6	36.6	49.3	36.7	50.8

The last set of questions relating to officer stress attempted to find out about the officers' experiences with dangerous situations while doing their jobs. From a subjective standpoint, a sizeable majority of the VPSOs surveyed felt that they were placed in situations of potential physical harm in order to fulfill their duties. Nearly four out of five VPSOs (79.5%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were lucky to not have been injured in some of the dangerous situations they faced as a VPSO while slightly less than three-fourths (71.8%) of the VPSOs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they have been put into situations so dangerous that they feared for their own life and safety (see Table 23). On this latter measure, the officers who had served for two or more years were much more likely to feel that they had been put in situations of danger to their life and safety when compared to those VPSOs serving for less than 2 years; the 22 percent difference between these two groups was statistically significant.

Table 23: Agreement with Statements Regarding Safety for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Safety	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Lucky not to be injured in some of the dangerous situations faced as a VPSO	79.5	73.8	82.9	77.1	81.3
Was put into situations so dangerous that officer feared for own life and safety	71.8	71.4	72.1	59.6	81.0*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Given answers to questions about being injured while making arrests and about responding to other dangerous situations, it would appear that VPSOs have good reason for feeling that their personal safety was in jeopardy when doing their job. As shown in Table 24, more than a third of those surveyed (37.2%) reported being injured when making an arrest while a VPSO. Of those hurt while making an arrest, nearly two-thirds (62.8%) required medical attention for their injuries. More than a quarter (27.7%) of the officers injured when making an arrest reported receiving injuries on three or more occasions. Aside from the actual injuries that come from having to take into custody unwilling suspects, many VPSOs also have to deal with perpetrators who had the potential for doing harm. Most of the VPSOs surveyed reported having to respond to suspects armed with firearms or other weapons. About three-quarters (76.1%) of the VPSOs reported responding to a perpetrator with a firearm while nearly two thirds (62.8%) reported responding to a perpetrator that was armed with a weapon other than a firearm. Roughly half (51.2%) of the VPSOs who said that they had responded to a perpetrator armed with a firearm reported that in one incident or another shots were fired. The officers who had served more than two years in the program were more likely to have been involved in situations involving armed perpetrators. There appears to be no difference between the Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs in terms of the proportion of officers who have had to deal with these potentially dangerous situations.

Table 24: Injuries Received While Making Arrests and Responses to Dangerous Situations for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

VPSO Reporting	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Being injured making an arrest	37.2	38.1	36.6	32.7	40.6
<u>Of those ever injured making an arrest</u>					
Being injured 3 or more times making an arrest	27.7	33.3	24.1	12.5	35.5
Injuries received while making arrest requiring medical attention	62.8	76.5	53.8	62.5	63.0
Responding to perpetrator armed with a firearm	76.1	78.6	74.6	65.3	84.4*
<u>Of those ever responding to perpetrator armed with firearm</u>					
Who did so 4 or more times	69.0	75.0	65.4	71.9	67.3
In which shots were fired	51.2	45.5	54.9	43.8	55.8
Responding to perpetrator armed with weapon other than a firearm	62.8	69.0	59.2	61.2	64.1
<u>Of those ever responding to perpetrator armed other weapon</u>					
Who did so 4 or more times	62.9	64.3	61.9	56.7	67.5
In which officer or others were injured by weapon	34.5	42.9	29.6	32.7	35.9

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

OVERSIGHT TROOPER CONTACT

Additional questions in the survey dealt with the nature and extent of contact VPSOs have with their Oversight Troopers. In Table 25 the perceptions of VPSOs regarding the type of contact they have with their Oversight Troopers are reported. Based upon their viewpoints, it would appear that the VPSOs are more likely to come into contact with an Oversight Trooper only when there is a specific situation to be handled. Slightly less than half (46.4%) of the VPSOs surveyed agreed with the statement that their Oversight Trooper would call quite often just to check in to see how the VPSO was getting along. A slim majority (55.4%) of the VPSOs

agreed with the statement that their Oversight Trooper would visit their village only for the purposes of attending to an emergency or for investigating a serious offense. There were no discernable differences between Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs or between VPSOs who had served for greater or fewer than two years on either of these measures.

Table 25: Agreement with Statements Regarding VPSO Contact with Oversight Troopers for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Oversight Trooper Contact	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Oversight Trooper calls quite often just to check on how things are going	46.4	52.4	42.9	45.8	46.9
Oversight Trooper visits village only in emergency or to investigate	55.4	54.8	55.7	47.9	60.9

Although the VPSOs were more likely to report contact with an Oversight Trooper when there was a situation that required contact, the responses to questions about the frequency of VPSO contact with Oversight Troopers indicate that they spoke with and saw one another quite often. As shown in Table 26, nearly all (92.8%) of the VPSOs reported talking with their Oversight Trooper on the telephone at least once a month, while more than three out of five (61.9%) VPSOs said that they saw their Oversight Trooper in person at least once a month. As with the nature of the contact, there were no statistically significant differences within the subgroups reported in Table 26.

The need for VPSO contact with their Oversight Troopers is clear when one considers the degree to which many officers serve in isolated villages often without any other form of police backup. In Table 27 the proportion of VPSOs who are located at a substantial distance from a State Trooper posting are reported. Nearly a third (31.4% of the VPSOs surveyed for this study indicated that they were more than 100 miles away from the nearest State Trooper posting. A slightly larger proportion (37.2% of VPSOs reported being more than one hour by air away from the nearest State Trooper posting. The figures presented in Table 27 also indicate that many VPSOs were or are currently the only public safety presence in their villages. Of the VPSOs surveyed for this study, less than half (46.0% reported working in a village where there were also

VPOs or tribal police present. The non-Native VPSOs surveyed were significantly more likely to serve in a village without this form of support. About 31 percent fewer non-Native VPSOs reported serving a village where they had VPOs or tribal police they could call on for assistance.

Table 26: Frequency of Contact with Oversight Troopers for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

VPSO Reporting	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Talking with Oversight Trooper at least once a month	92.8	92.8	92.7	91.7	93.7
Seeing Oversight Trooper in person at least once a month	61.9	65.9	59.4	70.2	55.5

Table 27: Distance and Time from Alaska State Trooper Posting and Availability of Local Police Backup for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

VPSO Reporting	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Being more than 100 miles by air away from nearest Trooper posting	31.4	39.1	25.8	24.3	35.0
Being more than 1 hour by air away from nearest Trooper posting	37.2	40.5	35.3	34.7	39.1
Working in a village where VPOs or Tribal Police were also present	46.0	26.2	57.7*	49.0	43.8

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

DEMANDS OF DUTY

According to a set of questions about the burdens of VPSO duties, the officers surveyed for this study were of the opinion that service in the program is very demanding. Many of the officers, for instance, felt that VPSO service made it difficult to take part in subsistence activities. As shown in Table 28, more than two-thirds (67.3%) of the officers felt that VPSO

duty made it difficult to find time to hunt or fish. A similar proportion (69.0%) agreed that they were unable to get away from duty for more than a week to take part in subsistence activities. A sizeable minority of VPSOs were of the opinion that the job also made it difficult to take part in other non-subsistence activities. Nearly half (45.5%) of the VPSOs surveyed agreed that they were unable to take part in community activities because of their duty, while about a third (35.7%) felt that they were unable to take a vacation because of VPSO duty. Most of the VPSOs were of the opinion that VPSO service also ate into their personal time. More than two-thirds (69.6%) of the VPSOs surveyed believed that their duty made it difficult to spend time alone with their family, while almost all (88.5%) felt that the village or villages they served expected them to do their job 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.

Table 28: Perceptions of Demands of VPSO Duty for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Demands of VPSO duty	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Difficult to find time to hunt or fish because of duty	67.3	59.5	71.8	61.2	71.9
Couldn't afford to hunt or fish on VPSO salary	30.9	30.0	31.4	28.6	32.8
Couldn't get away for more than a week to hunt or fish because of duty	69.0	59.5	74.6	65.3	71.9
Unable to take part in community activities because of duty	45.5	38.1	50.0	44.9	46.0
Unable to take a vacation because of duty	35.7	21.4	44.3*	34.7	36.5
Community expected 24-hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week-service	88.5	90.5	87.3	87.8	89.1
Difficult to get time to spend alone with family because of duty	69.6	61.0	74.6	68.8	70.3

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

EQUIPMENT

Not only did the VPSOs feel as though they were burdened by their duty, but they also reported being not particularly well equipped to do their job. In Table 29, the VPSOs' perceptions of the adequacy of their equipment and office space as well as the extent of the assistance they received in getting the equipment they felt they needed are reported. About two-thirds (61.9%) of the VPSOs surveyed felt that they did not have the equipment they needed to do their job properly while about half (53.6%) believed that they received little assistance to obtain the equipment they need to do the job. Although a strong majority (62.8%) of the VPSOs surveyed felt as though the office space provided them by the village was adequate for the job, there was a 24 percent statistically significant difference between the officers who had served for more than two years and those who had served less, with the former being much less satisfied with their office space.

Table 29: Perceptions of Adequacy of VPSO Equipment for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Equipment	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Did not have the equipment needed to properly do job	61.9	59.5	63.4	69.4	56.3
Received little assistance to obtain equipment needed to properly do job	53.6	57.1	51.4	56.3	51.6
Office space adequate for the job	62.8	59.5	64.8	49.0	73.4*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

SERVICE OF RELATIVES AND HOME VILLAGE

A portion of the survey was devoted to the examination of the VPSOs' experiences serving in their home villages and policing their relatives. These experiences are reported in Table 30. Of the Alaska Native VPSOs surveyed, most served in their home village (74.6%) or a village where they were related to other residents (92.3%). Serving in these locations often forced the VPSOs to enforce the law against relatives. Nearly four out of five (79.7% Alaska Native officers said that they had arrested a relative. Half as many Alaska Native VPSOs

(39.2%) reported making an arrest of an immediate family member.¹⁴ About a quarter (24.2%) of the Alaska Native VPSOs reported transferring from their home village to another village. Of those who transferred, 40 percent thought that it was easier to be a VPSO in the new village rather than at home.

Table 30: Experiences of VPSOs with Serving Home Village and Policing Relatives, for all Alaska Native VPSOs Surveyed, Total and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Service of Home Village or of Village with Relatives	Percent of 'Yes' Responses		
	All Alaska Native VPSOs	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Served in home village	74.6	63.3	82.9
Related to people in village	92.3	91.7	92.7
Arrested a relative	79.7	70.8	85.0
Arrested immediate family member	39.2	31.3	42.9
Transferred from home village to other village	24.2	24.0	24.4
Thought it easier to serve in non-home village (of those who transferred from home village)	40.0	20.0	50.0

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Questions in the survey also asked VPSOs about the pressures they experienced in policing their relatives and whether they found it difficult to do so. Although many Alaska Native VPSOs found it difficult to do their job when relatives were involved, an equivalent number did not report such problems. Somewhat surprisingly, a majority (57.1%) of the Alaska Native VPSOs surveyed felt as though they had not been pressured to be lenient toward their relatives (see Table 31). Given the prior research on the subject, we would have expected fewer VPSOs to have responded so. A similar proportion (52.9%) of Alaska Native VPSOs felt that it was difficult to enforce the law against relatives. This too is surprising, given what has been written elsewhere. Also of interest in Table 31 is the differences between the officers who had served for more than two years versus those who had served for less than two years. On both variables the relationships were statistically significant. Those officers in the longer service

¹⁴ Includes parents, siblings, or children.

category were much less likely to report being pressured to be lenient toward relatives while, at the same time, to be much more likely to feel it is difficult to enforce the law against relatives.

Table 31: Perceptions of Difficulties of Policing Relatives for all Alaska Native VPSOs Surveyed, Total and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Policing Relatives	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement		
	All Alaska Native VPSOs	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Not pressured to be lenient against relatives	57.1	44.8	65.9*
Difficult to enforce law against relatives	52.9	43.3	60.0*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

VILLAGE SUPPORT

In addition to the questions about the difficulties VPSOs had serving their home village and their relatives, the survey included questions to elicit a understanding of the general treatment of VPSOs by the villages they work in. More often than not, the VPSOs surveyed for this project reported being treated well by the villages they served. As shown in Table 32, roughly three out of five VPSOs felt as though they were supported by the village (58.9%) and that the village expressed their appreciation for the job the VPSO was doing (60.2%). An even greater proportion (76.1%) of VPSOs reported being told by village residents that they wanted the officer to continue working in the community. Even though the VPSOs felt they were supported by the village and that the village was appreciative of their efforts, many VPSOs also felt some mistreatment by the village. Nearly half (45.8%) of the VPSOs surveyed felt as though they were treated as an outcast in the village; a slightly smaller proportion (42.3%) of Alaska Native VPSOs were of the opinion that they were treated as if they were somehow less Native. On the first three measures considered in Table 32, a greater proportion of non-Native VPSOs felt they were supported and appreciated by the village. However, equal numbers of Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs believed that they were treated as outcasts. There was no discernible pattern to the responses given by the VPSOs serving for more or less than two years in the program.

Table 32: Agreement with Statements Regarding Village Treatment of VPSOs for all VPSOs surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding Treatment by Village	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Village supported me	58.9	66.7	54.3	51.0	65.1
People in village expressed appreciation for job done	60.2	66.7	56.3	63.3	57.8
People in village told me they wanted me to continue on as VPSO	76.1	83.3	71.8	79.6	73.4
Treated me as an outcast	45.8	44.7	46.4	42.6	48.3
Treated me as if I was somehow less of a Native Alaskan (Alaska Native VPSOs Only)	42.3	n/a	n/a	50.0	36.6

DIRECTIVENESS

In order to understand the extent to which VPSOs held attitudes thought to be necessary for the successful fulfillment of the police role, the survey included questions from a scale developed by Lorr and More (1980) to assess the level of an individual's directiveness. These questions were intended to assess the degree to which the VPSOs are or were able to tell others what to do in order to get their job done. As shown in Table 33, the VPSOs surveyed for this survey generally agreed with the scale items indicative of a high level of directiveness and disagreed with the scale items that represent a lower level of directiveness. The only scale item for which a majority of VPSOs answered in a fashion that represents largely non-directive attitudes is the statement regarding whether the officer felt he or she works best when in charge of a group. Otherwise, most of the officers' scores on the scale items appeared to indicate a willingness to direct others in order to accomplish job tasks.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Questions regarding the general demographic characteristics of the VPSOs were also included in the survey instrument. These included questions about the officers' sex, marital status, education, military experience, and their status as an Alaska Native. The results of these questions are shown in Table 34. The majority of the officers surveyed were married, had more

than only a high school education, were Alaska Native, were raised in an Alaska Native environment, and were overwhelmingly male. Relatively fewer VPSOs reported having military or National Guard experience.

Table 33: Agreement with Items on the Lorr and More Directiveness Scale for all VPSOs Surveyed by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Directiveness Scale Item	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
I have no desire to lead a group	23.0	23.8	22.5*	18.4	26.6
I usually initiate group activities	65.2	76.2	58.6	66.7	64.1
I shy away from taking charge	7.1	9.5	5.6	6.1	7.8
I work best in charge of a group	39.8	33.3	43.7	40.8	39.1
I avoid a supervisory job	6.2	9.5	4.2	8.2	4.7
I seek positions of influence	59.3	64.3	56.3	63.3	56.3
I let others lead committees	31.3	26.2	34.3	33.3	29.7
I take charge in emergencies	81.3	90.5	75.7	81.3	81.3

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

VPSO SERVICE

From the survey and from information provided by the State Troopers it is also possible to take a look at some of the characteristics related to the officers' service with the VPSO program. For instance, questions from the survey allow for an examination of the proportion of VPSOs who had quit and rejoined the program and their reasons for returning. According to the figures presented in Table 35, about a quarter (28.2%) of all VPSOs surveyed reported leaving the program at one time or another only to later return. The primary reason given for returning to the program was that the individual needed a job; a third (34.5%) of the returning VPSOs cited this as their reason for rejoining. The results of the survey also show that more than three-fourths (78.8%) of the officers attended the VPSO academy. The information for the other variables presented in Table 35 was provided by the State Troopers. As of the end of August

1999, 40.7 percent of the VPSOs surveyed were still employed by the program and 56.6 percent had served for two or more years.

Table 34: Demographic Characteristics for all VPSOs Surveyed by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Demographic Characteristic	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Is male	94.4	95.0	94.1	93.5	95.2
Is married	64.6	59.5	67.6	59.2	68.8
Has more than high school education	50.4	69.0	39.4*	55.1	46.9
Has military experience	46.0	57.1	39.4	55.1	39.1
Has national guard experience	21.4	22.0	21.1	25.0	18.8
Is Alaska Native	62.8	n/a	n/a	61.2	64.1
Raised in Alaska Native family	60.4	0.0	95.7*	56.3	63.5
Raised in Alaska Native village	58.9	9.8	87.3*	50.0	65.6

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Table 35: Job Related Characteristics for all VPSOs Surveyed by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Characteristics of VPSO Service	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Attended VPSO Academy	78.8	71.4	83.1	57.1	95.3*
Quit and rejoined program	28.2	20.0	32.9	23.4	31.7
Rejoined program due to lack of employment	34.5	14.3	40.9	27.3	38.9
Still employed as a VPSO	40.7	33.3	45.1	20.4	56.3*
Served two or more years as a VPSO	56.6	54.8	57.7	n/a	n/a

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

LEAVING THE PROGRAM

Two sets of questions dealt with in this chapter were asked only of the VPSOs who were no longer in the program at the time that the survey was administered. The first questions considered the circumstances under which they left the program and also how well they fared in the job market following their service as a VPSO. According to the responses of the former officers surveyed as well as records from the State Troopers, most VPSOs quit the program rather than being fired (see Table 36). There is, however, about a 12 percent discrepancy between the records of the Troopers and the responses of the officers regarding the proportion of officers who quit the program, with fewer VPSOs reporting being fired. This difference was especially true for the Alaska Native officers and for the officers who had served for more than two years in the program. In terms of their post-VPSO employment, it appears as though the former officers had some success in getting a job after leaving the program. Three out of five (60.8%) former VPSOs reported finding a new job within a month after leaving the program. These new jobs did not necessarily pay any better than what the officers received while employed as a VPSO. Only half (53.1%) of the former VPSOs surveyed said that the salary they received in their next job was greater than what they received as a VPSO. The job of choice following VPSO service was in law enforcement and private security. Roughly two out of five (38.8%) former VPSOs took a job in either of these areas. Of these 19 officers, 13 went into law enforcement (including one new Alaska State Trooper) and the other 6 worked in private security (including two positions on the North Slope and one position as a campus security guard at a university back east). About two-thirds (63.2%) of these officers working in law enforcement and private security reported earning more in their new position compared to what they earned as a VPSO.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The second set of questions asked only of officers who were no longer in the program when the survey was administered considered their views on the retirement benefits available to VPSOs. The results of these questions, shown in Table 37, indicate that the former VPSOs were generally dissatisfied with their retirement benefits. Three-fourths of the VPSOs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that VPSO retirement benefits are poor. A slightly larger proportion (82.4%) were of the opinion that VPSOs deserved retirement benefits that were better

than they received. Only one out of five (21.6%) of the former VPSOs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were satisfied with the retirement benefits. For some of the former VPSOs, especially those who are Alaska Native, dissatisfaction with retirement benefits played a part in their decision to leave the program. About a third (30.8%) of all former officers and a somewhat larger proportion (41.9%) of Alaska Native former officers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they would have remained in the program had the retirement benefits been better.

Table 36: Method of Termination from VPSO Position and Characteristics of Post-VPSO Employment for all Former VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Method of Termination and Characteristics of Post-VPSO Employment	Percent of 'Yes' Responses				
	All Former VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Quit, not fired, from VPSO service	90.4	90.5	90.3	87.9	94.7
Quit, not fired, from VPSO service (according to Trooper Records)	78.7	90.0	70.4	82.8	72.2
Took less than 1 month to find new job	60.8	75.0	51.6	63.6	55.6
Received a higher salary in post-VPSO job	53.1	42.1	60.0	41.9	72.2
Found job in law enforcement or private security after VPSO job	38.8	52.6	30.0	40.6	35.5

The final set of questions to be examined in this chapter considers the officers' viewpoints on a number of sources of dissatisfaction. Ten different possible sources of dissatisfaction were listed together in the questionnaire and the respondents were asked to rank them in order from the biggest source of dissatisfaction to the smallest. In Table 38 the average rankings of those sources of dissatisfaction are listed. Of those included in the set of questions, the top-ranked sources of dissatisfaction were, in order: the low pay earned by VPSOs, having to face dangerous situations unarmed, and having to deal with dangerous situations without backup. The lowest average rankings were given to dissatisfaction with training, the lack of time to hunt and fish when necessary, and uncertainties about the powers and duties of a VPSO. There were

few differences in the rankings given between Alaska Native and non-Native officers or by the officers who had served more than two years in the program and those who had served less.

Table 37: Agreement with Statements Regarding VPSO Retirement Benefits for all Former VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Statement Regarding VPSO Retirement Benefits	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement				
	All Former VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
VPSOs deserve better retirement	82.4	85.0	80.6	75.0	94.7
Satisfied with VPSO retirement benefits	21.6	33.3	13.3	18.2	27.8
Stayed a VPSO if retirement benefits were better	30.8	14.3	41.9*	27.3	36.8
Retirement Benefits Poor	75.0	81.0	71.0	75.8	73.7

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Table 38: Ranking of Sources of Dissatisfaction for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Alaska Native Status, and by Length of Service.

Source of Dissatisfaction	Rank of Averages of Dissatisfaction Sources				
	All VPSOs	Non-Native	Alaska Native	Serving Less Than 2 Years	Serving More Than 2 Years
Low Pay	1	2	1	1	1
Being Unarmed	2	1	2	2	2
Working Without Backup	3	3	3 ^t	3	3
24/7 Duty	4	4	3 ^t	4	4
Too Many Bosses	5	5	5	6 ^t	5
Promotional Opportunities	6	6	7	8	6
Lack of Village Support	7	7	6	5	7
Uncertainty about Powers and Duties	8	9	8	6 ^t	8
Poor Training	9	8	10	9	9
Lack of Time to Hunt and Fish	10	10	9	10	10

^tIndicates a tie average ranking for that source of dissatisfaction.

SUMMARY

The findings presented in this chapter provide some interesting insights into the perceptions and experiences of the officers who have served, or are currently serving, in the VPSO program. Although the results of some of the sets of questions were mixed, many provided clear indications of the officers' viewpoints. For instance, this chapter has clearly shown that most VPSOs joined the force because they thought it was a beginning for a career in law enforcement. It has also shown that the officers:

- are generally satisfied with their training,
- believe that they are poorly paid and often seek other forms of income,
- pay a lot for their housing,
- are generally clear about their role as a VPSO and the limits of their authority,
- often receive conflicting direction from the sources of authority above them,
- feel as though they have been placed in danger in their job,
- feel burdened by the demands of community expectations and difficulties finding time to participate in subsistence activities,
- often have had to arrest a relative, and
- believe they are not properly equipped for the job.

Of the officers who had left the VPSO program, most reported quitting rather than being fired, finding a job within a month after leaving the program, and believing that the retirement benefits available to VPSOs are fairly poor.

The analysis of the survey responses found a few interesting differences between the perspectives and experiences of Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs. Alaska Native VPSOs were more satisfied with promotional opportunities and officer training when compared to the non-Native officers. They reported less role ambiguity and community support than did non-Native VPSOs. The Alaska Native officers were also more likely to report difficulties making ends meet on their VPSO salary and to have used food stamps to support themselves and their families.

There were also a few interesting differences between the responses of the VPSOs who had served for more than two years at the time the analysis was done versus those officers who had served for less than two years at that time. The officers with the longer period of service were more likely to feel like they were well trained and they were more likely to have taken

another job while a VPSO to support themselves and their families. In terms of their housing costs, the officers who had served for more than two years were much more likely to believe that their housing costs were very expensive and to report that more than a third of their income went toward housing costs. The officers who had served for more than two years were also more likely to report having a clear understanding of their role and the limits of their authority as well as to feel like their safety was put into jeopardy while doing their job. The Alaska Native VPSOs who had served for more than two years were more likely to believe that it is difficult to enforce the law against relatives while, at the same time, to report that they had not received pressures to be lenient toward their relatives while conducting such enforcement.

The perceptions and reported experiences of the officers surveyed for this study provide a strong basis for understanding the reasons behind VPSO turnover. The next chapter uses the variables examined above in order to find out why some VPSOs last longer in the program compared to others.

CHAPTER 6: MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH VPSO TURNOVER

In this chapter the different measures obtained from the survey of former and current VPSOs have been used to arrive at an understanding of the reasons for attrition in the program. The data analysis conducted for this chapter involved two steps. First, the large number of variables made available from the survey were reduced in order to make the comparison of possible explanations more manageable. Principal components analysis was used for the purposes of data reduction and to assess the reliability of scale items included in the survey. These variables were then used in the second step of the analysis which involved a comparison of possible explanations for why some VPSOs remain in the program longer than others. An event history analysis method known as proportional hazards regression was used to determine the effect of the variables derived from the first step of the model upon the likelihood of a VPSO leaving the program at any one point in time.

From this analysis a picture of the VPSOs who are likely to leave the program has emerged. For all VPSOs surveyed, those who were not of Alaska Native heritage, who were dissatisfied with their training, who used food stamps while a VPSO, who did not take a second job while a VPSO, who worked in a village without a VPO or a tribal police officer also present, and who were not married were more likely to leave the program at any one point in time. For the sub-sample of Alaska Native VPSOs surveyed, those who did not serve in their home villages, who were more directive, who were more dissatisfied with their training, who used food stamps while a VPSO, who did not work an extra job while a VPSO, who did not report feeling endangered on the job, and who were single while a VPSO were more likely to not continue being a VPSO. Of the non-Native VPSOs surveyed, those who were dissatisfied with their training, who did not work a second job while a VPSO, and who were younger and not married were more likely to leave the program at any one point in time.

IDENTIFICATION OF VARIABLES FOR THE STATISTICAL MODEL OF TURNOVER

The first step taken to understand the effects of the measures gathered from the survey upon VPSO turnover was the identification of variables to be included in the proportional hazards regression model. For the purposes of simplification, it was necessary to reduce the number of possible measures to be compared. With over 100 questions on the survey, there were just too many possible measures to make sense of when making comparisons.

The data reduction process used in this chapter involved two basic steps. First of all, principal components analysis was conducted to examine the intercorrelations of similar survey measures to identify underlying theoretical constructs and to assess the unidimensionality of scale items included in the survey. Through principal components analysis it is possible to reduce a large set of correlated variables into a smaller set of uncorrelated variables that represents most of the information from the original larger set of variables (Dunteman, 1989). According to Williams (1979), a common use of principal components analysis “is where the researcher wishes to see if a relatively large number of measures can be reduced to few, more basic, underlying variables, as in how items on a test of some type may represent fewer variables than the items themselves” (p. 167). Once the original survey measures were reduced to a more manageable number of composite variables, the internal consistency (i.e., reliability) of the measures making up the composite variables was then examined to determine if they indeed measured a single trait.

Pay, Expenses, and Housing

The first set of variables from the survey examined using principal components analysis dealt with the officers’ views of their pay and their expenses. The correlations between these 16 variables are shown in Table 39. While many of the variables seem to have virtually no relationship to one another, there are correlations upwards of $r = .47$ among some of these measures indicating that they may be measuring similar phenomena.

Using a factor loading¹⁵ limitation of .50 (as suggested by Merenda [1997] for the sake of simplicity in interpreting the meanings of the factors), the results of the principal components analysis (based on varimax rotation) shown in Table 40 suggests that there are five different dimensions to the larger set of variables dealing with pay and expenses. The first factor loaded at the .50 level or above on five different variables related to how well the VPSO felt he or she was paid, to the proportion of the salary going to housing, and to the officers’ views on housing and hunting expenses. This factor clearly can be interpreted as being representative of the officers’ view of their pay and how well it meets expenses. Factor loadings for three different variables met the criterion of a .50 value on the second factor. These included whether the officer

¹⁵ Factor loadings are the correlations between the variable of interest and a factor identified in the principal components analysis (Williams, 1979).

felt VPSOs are paid much less than the job is worth, whether the officer was satisfied with promotional opportunities, and whether the officer thought that the VPSO position was a dead-end job. The second factor, which can be interpreted as being the “job value,” is indicative of the value of the officer puts on the VPSO position. Only two variables — whether the officer used food stamps while a VPSO and whether the officer used welfare while a VPSO — were correlated with the third factor above the .50 level. This factor can be interpreted as representing the officers’ use of income assistance benefits. The three variables with factor loadings above the .50 level for the fourth factor (comparative housing quality, satisfaction with housing quality, and home ownership) can be seen as representing the officers’ views of housing quality. The fifth and final factor shown in Table 39 is correlated only with the variable measuring whether the officer took an extra job while a VPSO.

The internal consistency of the variables with high correlations on each of the factors was assessed by examining the value of Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for those variables. With a range from 0 to 1.0, Cronbach’s alpha indicates whether a group of variables are measuring the same thing (Cronbach, 1970). “For example, if survey researchers asked a series of questions to measure a particular variable, they could use Cronbach’s alpha to determine the extent to which people answered the questions in the index in the same way. If, for instance, all respondents who said “yes” on question one always said “yes” to questions two and three, the alpha for those three would be 1.0” (Vogt, 1993, pp. 53-54). The values of Cronbach’s alpha for factors one through four are .74, .68, .58, and .61, respectively. With only one variable loading on the fifth factor, it was not possible to compute a reliability score.

For the purposes of deciding which factors have enough internal consistency, this study employed an alpha score cut-off of .60. Those groups of variables with an alpha score above that value were considered to be internally consistent and therefore reliable indicators. Although this cutoff is .10 below what is commonly used, use of a reduced value was reasonable given the small number of variables used to compute the reliability coefficients¹⁶. As shown by a number of authors (Carmines & Zeller, 1979; Cronbach, 1970; Kline, 1993), the value for Cronbach’s alpha increases as the number of variables included in its computation increases.¹⁷

¹⁶ Groth-Marnat (1997) suggests a reliability coefficient of .70 is adequate for the purposes of psychological research.

¹⁷ For instance, when the variables correlated with the income assistance factor are each used twice (for a total of four variables) to compute the reliability coefficient, the value of alpha increases from .58 to .85.

Table 39: Correlations Between Variables Associated with VPSO Pay and Expenses

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Not paid very well															
2. Paid more than others in village	-.23*														
3. No problem making ends meet w/ VPSO pay	-.44*	.42*													
4. Paid much less than job worth	.40*	-.16*	-.19*												
5. Used food stamps when VPSO	.12	-.21*	-.26*	.19*											
6. Taken other job when VPSO	.15	-.17*	-.23*	.16	-.02										
7. Used welfare when VPSO	.12	-.15	-.21*	.17	.41*	.11									
8. Hunting too expensive on VPSO salary	.47*	-.33*	-.18*	.21*	.22*	.06	.15								
9. Housing is very expensive	.44*	-.19*	-.27*	.21*	.10	.24*	.11	.44*							
10. Pay more than others in village for housing	.23*	.04	.02	.20*	.06	-.01	.04	.34*	.45*						
11. Poor housing condition compared to others	.29*	-.02	-.17*	.03	.11	.09	.13	.18*	.40*	.24*					
12. Satisfied with housing quality	-.16*	-.07	.01	-.13	-.02	.08	.00	-.20*	-.12	-.48*	-.41*				
13. Home owner when VPSO	-.06	.00	.01	-.07	-.04	-.03	-.11	.03	-.04	-.10	-.20*	.35*			
14. More than 1/3 rd of salary went to housing	.27*	-.13	-.10	.07	-.02	.19*	-.07	.35*	.41*	.27*	.18*	-.04	-.02		
15. Satisfied with promotional opportunities	-.32*	.15	.23*	-.38*	.04	-.26*	-.07	-.02	-.18*	-.01	-.05	.13*	.13	.00	
16. Thought VPSO is a "dead end" job	.22*	-.12	-.09	.21*	-.10	.19*	-.03	-.02	.15	.00	.09	-.08	-.10	-.04	-.61*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 40: Principal Components Analysis Factor Loadings of Variables Associated with VPSO Pay and Expenses

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Not paid very well	.586				
Paid more than others in village					
No problem making ends meet on VPSO pay					
Paid much less than job worth		.625			
Used food stamps when VPSO			.789		
Taken other job when VPSO					.692
Used welfare when VPSO			.728		
Hunting too expensive on VPSO salary	.748				
Housing very expensive	.715				
Pay more than others in village for housing	.637				
Poor housing condition compared to others				.679	
Satisfied with housing quality				-.702	
Home owner when VPSO				-.703	
More than 1/3 rd of salary went to housing	.670				
Satisfied with promotional opportunities		-.853			
Thought VPSO is a “dead end” job		.764			
Eigenvalue	2.65	2.05	1.87	1.74	1.48
Percent of Total Variance	16.6	12.8	11.7	10.8	9.3

Based upon the principal components analysis and the analysis of internal consistency, six different variables dealing with VPSO pay, housing, and expenses were included in the proportional hazards regression model of employment tenure length. The first variable to be included in the model was the factor scores¹⁸ of the first factor in Table 40 dealing with the officers' view of their pay and its ability to meet their expenses. With an alpha coefficient of .74, this variable met the criteria of reliability for inclusion in the model. In the analysis this variable was referred to as the "pay factor score." High values on the pay factor score were indicative of strong feelings that VPSOs were not paid very well and that the pay did not meet their expenses. Those officers with high values on the pay factor score could be expected to be more likely to leave the program when compared to those officers with low values. The second variable to be included in the model, as suggested by the second factor in Table 40, was a scale that measures the value VPSOs place on the occupation. For the three variables included in this scale (which will be referred to as the "job value scale"), the alpha reliability coefficient was .68. A high score on the job value scale was associated with feelings of dissatisfaction with the value of the VPSO position. A direct relationship between the job value scale and the likelihood of leaving the VPSO program was expected. With its reliability coefficient below the .60 cut-off point, a single measure for the income assistance factor (factor three in Table 40) was not used. Instead, the individual variables — whether the officer used food stamps while a VPSO and whether the officer used welfare while a VPSO — were included in the model. It was expected that the officers who used food stamps or welfare would be more likely to leave the VPSO program when compared with those officers who did not use either form of income assistance. The fifth variable to be included in the model (of those dealing with pay, expenses, and housing), based upon the fourth factor shown in Table 40, was the "housing quality factor score." With an alpha coefficient value of .61 between the variables with high factor loadings on factor four, the scores from this factor appear to be reliable indicators. For this factor score, high values were indicative of a situation of poor housing quality. A direct relationship was expected between the housing quality factor score and the probability of a VPSO leaving the program. The final measure related to pay, expenses, and housing to be included in the model was the individual

¹⁸ Factor scores are obtained for each case by multiplying the case's standardized value for each variable included in the analysis by the corresponding factor-loading coefficient and then summing up the resulting products (Norusis, 1993).

variable indicating whether the VPSO worked an extra job while employed in the program. The single individual variable is used because it did not ‘load’ in the principal components analysis with any other variables. It was expected that those officers who reported taking on a extra job while employed as a VPSO would be more likely to leave the program compared to those who did not do so.

Stress

Principal components analysis was also used to examine the intercorrelations of a set of variables dealing with VPSO stress. Included were the variables measuring role ambiguity, role conflict, the health effects of stress, the difficulties associated with VPSO duties, and the issues of officer safety. Correlation coefficients among these variables, as shown in Table 41, ranged from near zero to .78.

The results of the varimax-rotated principal components analysis shown in Table 42 indicated that six different factors accounted for the variation in the 21 variables dealing with VPSO stress. Except for the sixth factor, the interpretation of the factors is fairly straightforward because the variables loaded along the lines of the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 4. The first of these factors was most strongly associated with the variables that measure the difficulties officers face off the job because of their position. Each of the variables, including the variable dealing with the perceptions of villagers’ ‘24-7’ service expectations which loaded just below the .50 criterion, were considered to be indicative of the “duty demands” of the VPSO position. The second factor identified by the principal components analysis loaded on the four variables that were included in the survey in order to measure the physiological or “health effects of stress.” Factor three was most closely associated with the variables included in the survey to measure “role ambiguity” while the strongest loadings on factor four were with the variables designed to measure “role conflict.” The remaining two factors isolated in Table 42 deal with issues of officer safety. Two different variables loaded on the fifth factor which appeared to capture the extent to which officers “feel unsafe on the job.” The strongest factor loadings on the sixth factor were with the measure of whether the officer had been injured making an arrest and with the measure of whether the officer worked in a village where other law enforcement agents were also stationed. This factor could be interpreted as being an objective measure of officer safety, which might be more briefly termed the “objective safety” factor.

Seven different variables to be used in the proportional hazards regression model could be drawn from these six factors and an assessment of their internal consistency. The first five of these variables were scales developed from the groups of variables isolated by the first five factors shown in Table 42. These scales included the “health effects of stress,” the “demands of duty,” “role ambiguity,” “role conflict,” and “feeling unsafe on the job.” The alpha coefficients of reliability for these scales were .85, .80, .86, .82, and .64, respectively. All but one of these scales appeared to be strongly internally consistent; the exception was the “feeling unsafe” scale which had an alpha coefficient just above the .60 criteria outlined previously. When the inverse of the “role ambiguity” scale was used, we could expect a direct relationship between the likelihood of a VPSO leaving the program and the scores on all of these scales. The other two variables dealing with VPSO stress to be included in the model were the variables which most strongly loaded with the “objective safety” factor. Although these two variables were conceptually associated with officer safety, their alpha coefficient of .18 indicates that they were not measuring the same thing. However, instead of discarding the variables, they were instead each used individually in the proportional hazards model. A direct relationship was expected between the variable measuring whether the officer had ever been injured making an arrest and the likelihood of the officer leaving the program. An inverse relationship was expected between the variable measuring whether the officer served in a village where there was also a VPO or Tribal Police officer was also stationed and the likelihood of leaving the program. In other words, the officers who were injured making an arrest or who served in a village without another law enforcement presence would be more likely to quit when compared to the officers uninjured on the job or the officers working where there was another law enforcement presence.

Table 41: Correlations Between Variables Associated with VPSO Stress

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Clear about what to do as VPSO										
2. Clear about limits of authority	.78*									
3. Clear about others' expectations	.63*	.59*								
4. Role conflict of others' differing views of how to do job	-.03	.03	-.16*							
5. Role conflict of Local Govt. vs. Troopers	-.13	-.09	.00	.34*						
6. Role conflict of Local Govt. vs. Non-Prof.	-.15	-.09	-.07	.20*	.69*					
7. Role conflict of Non-Prof. vs. Troopers	-.24*	-.20*	-.19*	.24*	.52*	.59*				
8. Trouble sleeping because of job	-.27*	-.20*	-.25*	.24*	.35*	.27*	.21*			
9. Health adversely affected because of job	-.14	-.11	-.11	.10	.25*	.29*	.20*	.41*		
10. Difficulty relaxing because of job	-.14	-.07	-.19*	.25*	.22*	.23*	.18*	.68*	.55*	
11. Suffer headaches because of job	-.17*	-.03	-.14	.27*	.28*	.26*	.13	.56*	.55*	.60*
12. Difficult to participate in village activities because of duty	-.16*	-.06	-.10	.12	.26*	.15	.31*	.26*	.22*	.21*
13. Difficult to get vacation because of duty	.04	.08	.02	.08	.16*	.04	.15	.16*	.15	.24*
14. Village expects 24-7 service	-.12	-.11	-.03	.13	.35*	.23*	.15	.29*	.14	.35*
15. Difficult to spend time w/ family because of duty	-.02	.07	.05	.21*	.42*	.26*	.22*	.45*	.32*	.40*
16. Hunting difficult because of duty	.04	.06	-.02	.14	.21*	.11	.15	.16*	.15	.25*
17. Couldn't get away for a week to hunt	-.07	.11	-.09	.22*	.23*	.02	.04	.26*	.08	.27*
18. Felt lucky not to be injured	-.07	-.05	-.08	-.12	.04	-.03	-.08	.20*	.23*	.27*
19. Feared for life in danger	-.06	-.03	-.03	.03	.26*	.24*	.20*	.30*	.33*	.36*
20. Ever injured making arrest	.02	-.04	.05	-.05	-.05	.07	.08	-.03	.14	.11
21. VPO or Tribal Police in village	.12	.08	.15	-.13	.04	.04	-.11	-.09	.12	.05

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 41: Correlations Between Variables Associated with VPSO Stress (Cont.)

Variable	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Clear about what to do as VPSO										
2. Clear about limits of authority										
3. Clear about others' expectations										
4. Role conflict of others' differing views of how to do job										
5. Role conflict of Local Govt. vs. Troopers										
6. Role conflict of Local Govt. vs. Non-Prof.										
7. Role conflict of Non-Prof. vs. Troopers										
8. Trouble sleeping because of job										
9. Health adversely affected because of job										
10. Difficulty relaxing because of job										
11. Suffer headaches because of job										
12. Difficult to participate in village activities because of duty	.26*									
13. Difficult to get vacation because of duty	.14	.44*								
14. Village expects 24-7 service	.23*	.28*	.25*							
15. Difficult to spend time w/ family because of duty	.43*	.47*	.39*	.49*						
16. Hunting difficult because of duty	.16*	.48*	.38*	.28*	.51*					
17. Couldn't get away for a week to hunt	.16*	.45*	.40*	.34*	.44*	.48*				
18. Felt lucky not to be injured	.13	.06	.15	.15	.15	.18*	.08			
19. Feared for life in danger	.28*	.18*	.18*	.21*	.39*	.24*	.25*	.47*		
20. Ever injured making arrest	.03	-.08	-.12	.08	.16*	-.05	-.09	-.03	.22*	
21. VPO or Tribal Police in village	.06	.17*	.00	.05	.13	.18*	.14	.10	.14	.10

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 42: Principal Components Analysis Factor Loadings of Variables Associated with VPSO Stress

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Clear about what to do as VPSO			.899			
Clear about limits of authority			.900			
Clear about others' expectations			.807			
Role conflict of others' differing views of how to do job						
Role conflict of Local Govt. vs. Troopers				.813		
Role conflict of Local Govt. vs. Non-Prof.				.866		
Role conflict of Non-Prof. vs. Troopers				.793		
Trouble sleeping because of job		.750				
Health adversely affected because of job		.670				
Difficulty relaxing because of job		.828				
Suffered headaches because of job		.815				
Difficult to participate in village activities because of duty	.742					
Difficult to get vacation because of duty	.655					
Village expects 24-7 service	.481					
Difficult to spend time w/ family because of duty	.633					
Hunting difficult because of duty	.751					
Couldn't get away for a week to hunt	.774					
Felt lucky not to be injured					.847	
Feared for life in danger					.612	
Ever injured making arrest						.805
VPO or Tribal Police in village						.558
Eigenvalue	3.11	3.04	2.44	2.40	1.47	1.31
Percent of Total Variance	14.8	14.5	11.6	11.4	7.0	6.2

Support and Training

A third set of variables subjected to principal components analysis considered the intercorrelations between the measures associated with the officers' perceptions of the support they received and of their training. These variables included measures of contact with Oversight Troopers, of the officers' views of community appreciation, of their satisfaction with their equipment, and of whether they felt treated as an outcast in the village. The correlations between these variables, shown in Table 43, ranged from as high as .75 to as low as zero.

In Table 44 the results of the principal components analysis for these variables are presented. With a varimax rotation, this analysis indicated that six different factors account for the variation in the 18 variables associated with support and training of VPSOs. As with the factors associated with officer stress, the interpretation of the factors in Table 44 was clear-cut because the factor loadings of the variables corresponded with the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 4. For instance, all of the variables measuring officer satisfaction with training loaded the highest with the first factor shown in Table 44. Likewise, the variables measuring the officers' perceptions of village support loaded together on the second factor shown there. The third factor in Table 44 was most strongly associated with the two variables that measured the officers' dissatisfaction with their equipment and the assistance they received in obtaining the equipment they felt they needed to do their job properly. Another variable expected to be related to these two variables dealing with satisfaction with equipment — the measure of satisfaction with office space — did not have a high enough factor loading to be associated with any of the factors. For the fourth factor in Table 44, the variables most closely associated were those measuring the frequency and circumstances of contact the VPSOs and with their Oversight Troopers. The two variables that measured the distance VPSOs were located from their Oversight Troopers had their strongest loadings on the fifth factor. Finally, the sixth factor related to VPSO support and treatment shown in Table 44 captured the officers' perceptions of whether they were shunned by the village or villages they served. Variables measuring whether the officer felt like the village treated him or her like an outcast and, for Alaska Native officers, variables measuring whether the officer felt people treated him as if he or she were somehow less an Alaska Native had the strongest association with this sixth factor.

Table 43: Correlations Between Variables Associated with VPSO Support and Training

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Felt well trained										
2. Felt training did not prepare for many things	-.37*									
3. Felt VPSO academy prepared officer	.56*	-.42*								
4. Not satisfied with training	-.42*	.64*	-.67*							
5. Oversight Trooper calls just to check in	.27*	-.27*	.34*	-.36*						
6. Oversight Trooper visits only in emergency or investigation	-.01	.09	-.01	.08	-.23*					
7. How often phone Oversight Trooper	.32*	-.31*	.23*	-.36*	.40*	-.21*				
8. How often see Oversight Trooper in person	.05	-.11	.05	-.14	.21*	-.16	.47*			
9. Miles to nearest Trooper posting	-.05	.08	.05	-.03	-.13	-.01	-.12	-.11		
10. Time by air to nearest Trooper posting	-.06	.06	.10	-.05	.06	-.03	-.05	-.03	.64*	
11. Felt village supported officer	.31*	-.27*	.29*	-.27*	.26*	.02	.09	.01	-.01	.06
12. Believed village expressed appreciation	.07	-.16	.07	-.12	.23*	-.06	.08	.04	-.03	-.05
13. Village asked officer to continue to as VPSO	.07	-.24*	.19*	-.22*	.11	-.05	.06	-.06	.02	-.06
14. Felt as if not equipped to do job	-.30*	.37*	-.30*	.30*	-.09	.04	-.13	-.02	-.03	-.10
15. Received little help to get equipment	-.29*	.37*	-.30*	.25*	-.09	.00	-.01	-.02	-.21*	-.27*
16. Felt office space is adequate	.10	-.14	.19*	-.31*	.14	-.08	.15	.12	.00	-.01
17. Felt treated like an outcast	-.21*	.10	-.10	.08	-.04	.11	.06	.00	.01	-.01
18. Felt treated as if less of an Alaska Native	-.13	.12	.00	.06	-.04	.02	-.01	-.12	.06	.04

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 43: Correlations Between Variables Associated with VPSO Support and Training (cont.)

Variables	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Felt well trained							
2. Felt training did not prepare for many things							
3. Felt VPSO academy prepared officer							
4. Not satisfied with training							
5. Oversight Trooper called just to check in							
6. Oversight Trooper visited only in emergency or investigation							
7. How often phoned Oversight Trooper							
8. How often saw Oversight Trooper in person							
9. Miles to nearest Trooper posting							
10. Time by air to nearest Trooper posting							
11. Felt village supported officer							
12. Believed village expressed appreciation	.54*						
13. Village asked officer to continue to as VPSO	.36*	.54*					
14. Felt as if not equipped to do job	-.28*	-.08	.05				
15. Received little help to get equipment	-.35*	-.08	.03	.75*			
16. Felt office space is adequate	.32*	.14	.18*	-.18*	-.21*		
17. Felt treated like an outcast	-.19*	-.26*	-.14	.08	.10	.00	
18. Felt treated as if less of an Alaska Native	-.17*	-.14	.03	.05	-.02	.13	.39*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 44: Principal Components Analysis Factor Loadings of Variables Associated with VPSO Support and Training

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Felt well trained	.716					
Felt training did not prepare for many things	-.655					
Felt VPSO academy prepared officer	.847					
Not satisfied with training	-.817					
Oversight Trooper called just to check in				.513		
Oversight Trooper visited only in emergency or investigation				-.592		
How often phoned Oversight Trooper				.703		
How often saw Oversight Trooper in person				.757		
Miles to nearest Trooper posting					.889	
Time by air to nearest Trooper posting					.892	
Felt village supported officer		.678				
Believes village expressed appreciation		.839				
Village asked officer to continue to as VPSO		.788				
Felt as if not equipped to do job			.866			
Received little help to get equipment			.872			
Felt office space is adequate						
Felt treated like an outcast						.750
Felt treated as if less of an Alaska Native						.815
Eigenvalue	2.86	2.11	1.95	1.80	1.72	1.51
Percent of Total Variance	15.9	11.7	10.8	10.0	9.6	8.4

The 18 variables associated with VPSO training and support that were used in the principal components analysis were reduced to a total of six different variables for use in the proportional hazards regression model of VPSO turnover. The first of these variables was a scale measuring “training satisfaction.” This scale includes all of the variables that were most closely associated with factor 1 in Table 44. The internal consistency coefficient for this scale was .73. High scores on the training satisfaction scale indicated a high level of satisfaction whereas low scores indicated a low level of satisfaction or, in other words, dissatisfaction. An inverse relationship was expected between this variable and the likelihood of a VPSO leaving the program. Those VPSOs that are more dissatisfied with their training were probably more likely to quit than those less dissatisfied. The second variable to be drawn from the principal components analysis in Table 44 was a scale measuring community appreciation and support. This scale, to be termed “community support” in the analysis, aligned most strongly on the second factor in that table. The alpha coefficient of reliability for this scale was an acceptable .73. Low scores on this scale are associated with officers’ low levels of perceiving that the community supported them and appreciated their efforts. As with the measure on training satisfaction, an inverse relationship were expected between the scores on the community support variable and officer attrition. A third variable identified in the principal components analysis was a scale that measured the officers’ dissatisfaction with their equipment. Most strongly associated with the third factor in Table 44, the alpha coefficient was a strong .86 for the two variables comprising the “equipment dissatisfaction” scale. The officers who expressed high levels of dissatisfaction on this scale would be expected to be more likely to leave the program compared to those with lower levels of dissatisfaction. The fourth variable drawn from the principal components analysis corresponded with the factor scores for the fourth factor isolated there. This one dealt with the frequency and circumstances of contact the VPSOs have with their Oversight Troopers. In the proportional hazards model this variable was referred to as “Oversight Trooper contact.” The alpha reliability coefficient was .61 for the four variables most closely associated with this factor score. An inverse relationship was foreseen between this measure and the likelihood of leaving the VPSO program. Overall, those officers with poorer contact with their Oversight Troopers should not last as long in the program when compared to those officers reporting better contacts. A fifth variable dealing with VPSO training and support identified was the principal components analysis is a measure of the distance that VPSOs were

from their Oversight Troopers. Termed “Oversight Trooper distance” for the proportional hazards analysis, this variable used the inverse of the factor scores for the fifth factor shown in Table 44. The inverse of this factor score corresponded with the distance to the Oversight Trooper; higher factor scores indicate further distances and *vice versa*. The two variables that most strongly load on the fifth factor in Table 44, miles to the nearest Trooper posting and time by air to the nearest Trooper posting, had a very respectable .78 reliability coefficient. In terms of its relationship to officer turnover, it was expected that the officers further from oversight would be more likely to leave the program than those that are closer. The final variable associated with VPSO support and training isolated in the principal components analysis was a measure of whether the officers felt shunned in their villages because of their position. Referred to as the “treated as outcast” scale in the analysis of turnover, this measure combined the final two variables shown in Table 44. The coefficient of reliability for this scale was .70. A direct relationship was expected in the proportional hazards regression analysis between this scale and the likelihood of leaving the VPSO program. All things equal, those VPSOs who felt like they were treated as outcasts probably were not going to remain as long as those who did not have such feelings.

Alaska Native Heritage

The final set of variables were those having to do with the Alaska Native heritage of the officers surveyed. Variables dealing with the officers’ upbringing in an Alaska Native village and family, their familial relationships with village residents, and whether the existence of difficulties in dealing with relatives as a VPSO were all included in this principal components analysis. As shown in Table 45, the correlations between these variables were quite strong. With correlations upwards of .94, it was especially necessary to use principal components to attempt to separate the effects of the individual variables for the proportional hazards regression analysis.

Two factors were identified in the principal components analysis of the eight variables associated with the officers’ Alaska Native heritage. The first factor identified in Table 46 was most strongly associated with six of the eight variables analyzed. Together, these six variables could all be seen a measure of the degree to which an officer was entrenched as an Alaska Native in an Alaska Native village. The alpha reliability coefficient for the six variables comprising this

factor was a very high .94 indicating that they all measuring a similar phenomena. For the proportional hazards regression analysis conducted below, the factor scores for this first factor were used because of the high intercorrelations between these variables make it impossible to sort out the effects of any one of the individual variables. This factor score was referred to as the “Alaska Native” variable in the proportional hazards regression analysis. The higher the score on this variable, the more likely the officer was to be Alaska Native, to be related to village residents, to serve in their home village, and to have been raised in an Alaska Native family or village.

Table 45: Correlations Between Variables Associated with VPSO Alaska Native Heritage

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Related to village residents							
2. Arrested relative	.84*						
3. Village was hometown	.72*	.60*					
4. Not pressured by relatives to be lenient	.07	.11	.05				
5. Felt policing relatives was difficult	.14	-.14	.26*	-.05			
6. Was Alaska Native	.73*	.61*	.68*	.20*	.16*		
7. Raised in Alaska Native family	.72*	.60*	.67*	.14	.20	.94*	
8. Raised in Alaska Native village	.64*	.52*	.67*	.12	.13*	.76*	.77*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 46: Principal Components Analysis Factor Loadings of Variables Associated with VPSO Alaska Native Heritage

Variables	1	2
Related to village residents	.887	
Arrested relative	.794	
Village was hometown	.829	
Not pressured by relatives to be lenient		-.786
Felt policing relatives was difficult		.643
Was Alaska Native	.915	
Raised in Alaska Native family	.913	
Raised in Alaska Native village	.838	
Eigenvalue	4.56	1.07
Percent of Total Variance	60.0	13.4

The two variables most strongly associated with the second factor shown in Table 46 dealt with the officers' perceptions of the difficulties of policing relatives. While it was reasonable to expect that they would be strongly related, the interpretation of the .09 value for the alpha reliability coefficient for these two variables indicated that each was not necessarily measuring the same thing. As such, each of the variables was used individually in the proportional hazards regression analysis. It was expected that the officers who reported feeling that policing their relatives was difficult and the officers who reported feeling pressured by their relative to be lenient toward them would be more likely to leave the VPSO program.

Other Independent Variables

Three other independent variables were also included in the proportional hazards regression model examining VPSO turnover. First, the model examined the effect of marital status upon the likelihood of an officer leaving the program. As noted by Monks and Pizer (1998), individuals who are married tend to last longer in their jobs than do their unmarried counterparts. The second other variable used was the age of the officer at the start of their position as a VPSO. According to Mobley (1982), there is an inverse relationship between age and turnover. Those officers who were younger would be expected to leave the VPSO program quicker when compared with the officers who were older when joining.

The final independent variable included in the proportional hazards regression model was a measure of the officers' directiveness. Specifically, scores from the eight-item directiveness scale developed by Lorr and More (1980) were used as an indication of the degree that officers had personalities disposed toward leading, directing, or influencing others in situations that required initiative, decision making, or the assumption of responsibility. For these eight items, an alpha reliability coefficient of .67 was found which, for the purposes of this report, indicated that together the individual items were indeed measuring a similar phenomenon. As noted in Chapter 4, some (Moeller, 1978) have argued that the police role is inappropriate for Native people because it violates core values and deeply-held cultural norms against ordering others or being 'bossy.' Due to these conflicts, it was expected that the officers with low scores on the 'directiveness' scale would be more likely to leave the program at any one time when compared with those officers with higher scores.

Dependent Variable

The measure of job attrition used in this analysis was the months of continual service in the VPSO program by an officer. This measure was computed using the officer's date of hire and, for those officers who had left the program, the date of departure. The date of August 30, 1999 was used as the date of departure for those officers still in the program. These dates of service were provided to the author by the Alaska State Troopers from the Alaska Department of Public Safety VPSO database.

For the purposes of understanding VPSO attrition, it would be best if officers joined the program, served only in one village during their career, quit when their time came, and never returned to the job. Unfortunately, the employment patterns in the VPSO program are not this simple. VPSOs often transfer from one village to another. They sometimes quit the program, only to return months or years later. Each of these issues has ramifications for the specification of a dependent variable to be used in multivariate analyses.

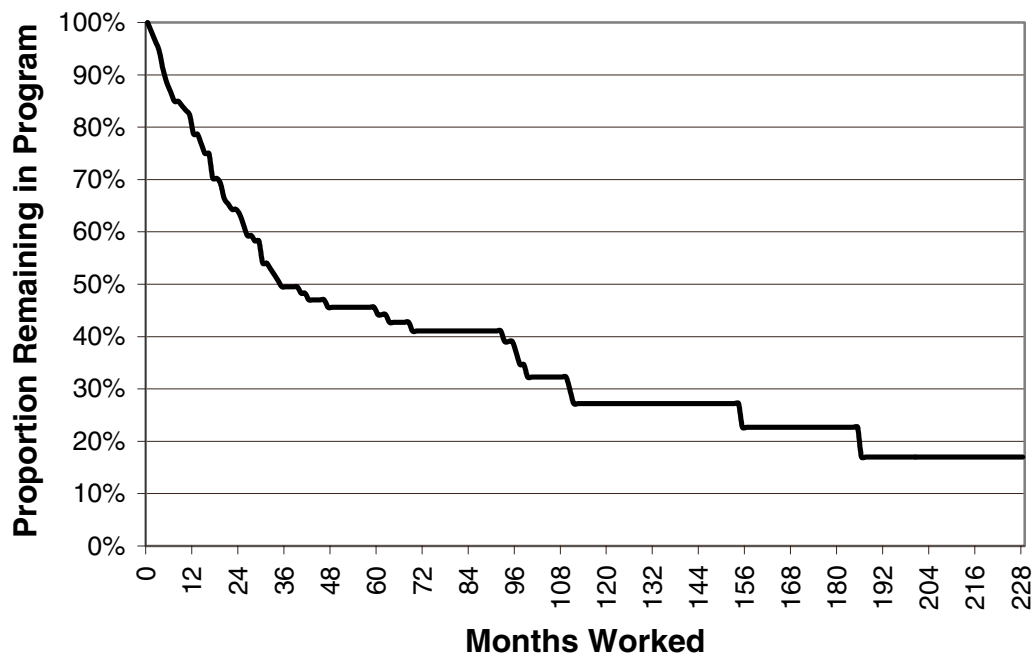
In this study, the months of service of VPSOs who transferred from one community to another were counted as continual. From a standpoint of job tenure, the idea of attrition implies that an individual is no longer employed by an organization. However, when VPSOs transfer, they are still employed by the regional non-profit corporations. As such, it would be reasonable to consider them as still being employed and not to have turned-over.

While moving from one village to another *via* transfer should not be seen as attrition, returning to the program after quitting or being fired at an earlier point in time cannot be seen as continual service. Although some officers might quit only for a few months only to be rehired others might stay away for more than a few years before returning to the program. Even though they have returned to the program, all of these VPSOs have discontinued their employment with the program. For the purposes of this study, namely understanding why the employment of VPSOs is discontinued, only the dates of the latest posting for those officers who once quit the program to return to it later were used to compute the dependent variable for this analysis.

A continuous time measure of service as a VPSO, rather than a dichotomous measure of whether the VPSO was still employed, was used in this study because the latter measure does not allow for an examination of factors related to why some VPSOs left the service after only a few months while others have remained employed for many years. As seen in Figure 10, the length of time that officers who responded to the survey remained with the program varied greatly from

a minimum of 1.05 months to a maximum of 228 months before leaving. Half of the officers responding to the survey who left the VPSO program remained for 35.6 months. This was about two years longer than the median for all officers serving in the program from 1980 through 1998 (see Table 7 in Chapter 3) The mean number of months worked before leaving the program for the officers who responded to the survey was 46.5 months. The mean value for the all officers serving in the program since 1980, as shown in Table 7 was about half that (22 months) for the officers responding to the survey.

Figure 10: Proportion of Officers Remaining in the Program by Number of Months for all VPSOs Surveyed.



THE PROPORTIONAL HAZARDS MODELS

A proportional hazards regression model was used in the current study to estimate the relationships between the predictor variables and the period of time that the VPSOs remained employed in the program. Also known as “Cox regression,” proportional hazards regression models the hazard rate (i.e., the probability of departure over time) based on the influence of multiple variables of prediction (Luke, 1993; Morita, Lee, & Mowday, 1993). When applied to the turnover of employees, “hazard rates represent the percentage of the sample at risk (i.e., who have stayed to a given point) who leave at the next interval” (Somers, 1996). A prime benefit of

employing a proportional hazards model rather than one estimated by ordinary least squares or logistic regression is that proportional hazards regression allows for an estimation of the effect of censored cases (i.e., those that have not reached the terminal event, which, in this study, were those still remaining in the VPSO program) (Allison, 1984). Proportional hazards regression has been used in a number of multivariate studies of job turnover (Dickter, Roznowski, & Harrison, 1996; Ng, Cram, & Jenkins, 1991; Somers, 1996). It has also been used to model the hazard rates of juvenile recidivism (Lattimore, Visser, & Linster, 1995), first contact with a juvenile court (Day, 1998), adult recidivism (DeJong, 1997), marriage and parenthood in young couples (Michael & Tuma, 1985), child mortality (Lehrer, 1984), and divorce (Fergusson, Horwood, & Shannon, 1984).

Three different proportional hazards regression models were examined to determine the effect of the various independent variables upon VPSO turnover. The first model examined the effects of the independent variables upon the likelihood of leaving the VPSO program for all of the VPSOs surveyed. A second model looked at the effects of the independent variables upon the likelihood of turnover for the Alaska Native officers surveyed. The third model considered the effects of the independent variables upon the likelihood of turnover for the non-Native VPSOs that responded to the survey. The results of these analyses, along with the results of correlation coefficients between all variables used in the models, are presented below.

The Turnover Model for All VPSOs

The first proportional hazards regression analysis was conducted for all VPSOs responding to the survey. Table 47 presents the correlation coefficients for those variables. None of the correlations between the explanatory variables is above the .50 level which indicates that each is an independent measure in and of itself.

Results of the proportional hazards regression analysis for all VPSOs are shown in Table 48. Interpretation of these results was a fairly straightforward process. The coefficient estimates presented in the middle column of Table 48 were interpreted much like unstandardized regression coefficients (Allison, 1984). The direction of the sign attached to each coefficient indicates the direction of the effect of the independent variable upon the hazard rate (Luke, 1993). A more useful interpretation of the effects of individual explanatory variables is shown in the far right hand column of Table 48; as pointed out by Allison (1984), exponentiation of the

coefficients (taking their antilogs) provides for a more intuitive interpretation of the results. Doing so allows for the calculation of the percentage change in the hazard rate for each unit change in the explanatory variable (Allison, 1984; Luke, 1993). For dichotomous variables, the exponentiated coefficients are treated as an indication of the relative risk associated with the variable (Norušis, 1994).

Overall, the combination of the 25 explanatory variables in the proportional hazards analysis shown in Table 48 yielded a model statistically significant below the .001 alpha level. Of the four broad categories of independent variables — dissatisfaction with pay and expenses, stresses of village policing, support and training, and Alaska Native heritage — each had variables that made a statistically significant contribution to the model.

Two of the variables dealing with dissatisfaction with pay and expenses, the measure of whether the officer used food stamps while a VPSO and the measure of whether the officer took a second job while a VPSO, were statistically significant below the .05 level. The positive sign of the coefficient in the middle column of Table 48 for the used food stamps measure is interpreted as showing that officers who used food stamps were more likely to leave the VPSO program than those that did not. The exponentiation of that coefficient, as shown in the far right hand column of Table 48, indicates that the officers who used food stamps were more than five times as likely to leave the program in any one month. While it was expected that the officers using food stamps would be more likely to leave the program, the VPSOs who worked an extra job were actually about 71 percent less likely to leave the program at any one time compared to those not taking an extra job. None of the other variables dealing with the VPSOs' dissatisfaction with pay, expenses, and housing quality had a statistically significant effect upon the hazard rate.

Of the seven variables related to the stresses of village policing shown in Table 48, only one had a statistically significant impact upon the likelihood of a VPSO leaving the program. The variable measuring the presence or absence of other police in the village (i.e., Village Police Officers or Tribal Police Officers) had an inverse, statistically significant relationship with the hazard rate. VPSOs serving in villages where there were other police present were about half as likely to leave the program in any one month when compared to the VPSOs serving in villages without such a presence. The remaining six variables measuring stress had negligible effects upon the hazard rate.

Table 47: Correlation Coefficients for Variables Used in Proportional Hazards Regression Model of the Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all VPSOs Surveyed.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Months worked as a VPSO													
2. Alaska Native	.19*												
3. Not Pressured by Relatives	.03	.18											
4. Difficulties Policing Relatives	-.01	.19*	-.07										
5. Directiveness	-.16	-.07	.14	.07									
6. Training satisfaction	.19*	.21*	.21*	-.16	.10								
7. Community support	-.01	-.07	.10	-.19*	.07	.27*							
8. Dissatisfaction with equipment	-.08	-.02	-.11	.11	.15	-.42*	-.18						
9. Oversight Trooper contract	-.10	-.13	.12	-.10	.16	.09	.02	.00					
10. Oversight Trooper distance	-.01	-.13	-.03	-.10	.11	.04	.01	.12	.00				
11. Treated as outcast	-.06	.10	-.18	.28*	.04	-.16	-.23*	.05	-.09	-.06			
12. Pay	.14	.18*	.01	.18	.12	.02	.01	.25*	-.06	-.06	.32*		
13. Job value	.04	-.27*	.06	.10	.09	-.32*	-.24*	.30*	-.01	.04	.11	.06	
14. Housing quality	-.10	-.10	-.09	.02	.07	-.10	-.19	.03	.07	.16	.09	.00	.09
15. Worked extra job	-.20	.36*	.07	.10	.07	-.15	-.05	.11	-.05	.03	.05	.08	-.03
16. Used food stamps	.06	.12	.04	.17	-.01	.09	-.07	.01	.06	.11	.00	-.05	.07
17. Used welfare	.32*	.07	.07	.04	.05	.09	-.14	.05	-.10	.06	.03	.10	.27*
18. Health effects of stress	.09	.20*	-.03	.28*	.06	-.29*	-.42*	.24	-.12	-.05	.42*	.22*	.37*
19. Demands of duty	-.03	.27*	.00	.27*	.04	-.11	-.29*	.24*	-.09	-.07	.40*	.44*	.12
20. Role ambiguity	-.12	-.29*	-.19*	.19*	-.06	-.48*	-.16*	.26*	-.12	-.06	-.12	-.12	.18
21. Role conflict	.07	-.01	-.03	.17	.13	-.21*	-.10	.30*	.01	-.12	.24*	.40*	.03
22. Feeling unsafe on job	.11	.09	-.14	.29	.05	-.14	-.29	.19	-.07	.04	.25	.11	.21
23. Ever injured making arrest	.10	-.06	-.07	-.02	.12	.07	-.04	-.06	-.08	.16	.16	-.10	.14
24. VPOs or tribal police in village	.12	.35*	.04	.15	-.06	.14	-.03	-.25*	.03	-.16	.02	.10	-.13
25. Not married	.12	.09	.18	-.02	-.14	.14	.10	-.22*	-.06	.01	-.06	-.17	.00
26. Age at start of position	-.05	-.32*	.08	-.14	-.18	-.10	.14	-.06	.14	.01	-.10	-.01	-.05

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 47: Correlation Coefficients for Variables Used in Proportional Hazards Regression Model of the Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all VPSOs Surveyed (cont.).

Variables	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
1. Months worked as a VPSO												
2. Alaska Native												
3. Not Pressured by Relatives												
4. Difficulties Policing Relatives												
5. Directiveness												
6. Training satisfaction												
7. Community support												
8. Dissatisfaction with equipment												
9. Oversight Trooper contract												
10. Oversight Trooper distance												
11. Treated as outcast												
12. Pay												
13. Job value												
14. Housing quality												
15. Worked extra job	.04											
16. Used food stamps	.18	.41*										
17. Used welfare	.06	-.02	.11									
18. Health effects of stress	.12	.11	-.02	.29*								
19. Demands of duty	.18	.17	.19	.09	.41*							
20. Role ambiguity	.02	-.06	.02	.05	.21*	.02						
21. Role conflict	.10	-.05	-.04	.00	.34*	.31*	.17					
22. Feeling unsafe on job	.08	.00	.00	.15	.37	.32	.06	.15				
23. Ever injured making arrest	.08	-.09	-.09	.06	.07	-.03	-.01	.05	.12			
24. VPOs or tribal police in	-.04	.21	.19	-.04	.04	.16	-.13	-.02	.12	.10		
25. Not married	-.19*	.20*	.22*	-.01	-.07	-.09	.03	-.10	.01	.07	.09	
26. Age at start of position	-.14	-.11	-.07	-.03	-.27*	-.20*	.02	-.13	-.16	-.03	-.13	.06

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 48: Proportional Hazards Model of Individual Variables, Factors, and Scales Upon Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all VPSOs Surveyed.

Type	Variable	B	Sig	Exp(B)
Factor	Alaska Native Heritage	-.399	.041	.671
Indicator	Not Pressured by Relatives	.225	.257	1.252
Indicator	Difficulties Policing Relatives	.032	.826	1.033
Scale	Directiveness	.035	.393	1.035
Scale	Training Satisfaction	-.159	.007	.853
Scale	Community Support	.007	.914	1.007
Scale	Dissatisfaction with Equipment	.035	.634	1.036
Factor	Oversight Trooper Contract	.163	.231	1.178
Factor	Oversight Trooper Distance	-.229	.118	.795
Scale	Treated as Outcast	.146	.197	1.158
Factor	Pay	-.221	.214	.802
Scale	Job Value	-.084	.213	.920
Factor	Housing Quality	.135	.335	1.145
Indicator	Used Food Stamps When VPSO	1.663	.000	5.275
Indicator	Gone on Welfare When VPSO	-1.182	.167	.307
Indicator	Taken Other Job When VPSO	-1.258	.000	.284
Scale	Health Effects of Stress	-.002	.971	.998
Scale	Demands of Duty	-.015	.708	.985
Scale	Role Ambiguity	.014	.815	1.014
Scale	Role Conflict	-.040	.476	.961
Scale	Feeling Unsafe on Job	-.085	.320	.919
Indicator	Ever Injured Making Arrest	.010	.976	1.010
Indicator	VPOs or Tribals Also in Village	-.739	.021	.478
Indicator	Not Married	.712	.031	2.038
Indicator	Age At Start of Latest Position	-.009	.577	.991

Global $D^2 = 67.897$, 25 d.f., $p = .0000$

Only one of the six variables shown in Table 48 that measured the VPSOs perceptions of officer support and training had a statistically significant association with the likelihood of officer turnover. The variable that measured the officers' satisfaction with VPSO training had a negative effect upon the hazard rate. As was expected, those officers who were dissatisfied with their training were more likely to leave the program in any given month when compared with those officers that had relatively higher levels of satisfaction with their training. When all else is held equal, a VPSO was 15 percent more likely to leave the program for each one unit reduction in the score on the training satisfaction scale. None of the other five variables concerning officer support and training had statistically significant effects upon the likelihood of VPSO attrition.

As with the measures of stress and of support and training, only one of the four variables associated with the officers' Alaska Native heritage had an impact upon VPSO turnover. Specifically, as shown in Table 48, the Alaska Native factor score had an inverse relationship with the hazard rate; high scores on the Alaska Native factor score were related to a reduced likelihood of turnover. Based upon the variables most closely associated with the Alaska Native factor identified in the principal components analysis presented in Table 46, it appears as though officers that were Alaska Native, that came from an Alaska Native village and family, that served in their home village, that were related to those they serve, and that had arrested a relative were the officers who were less likely to leave the program. The officers' scores on the directiveness scale as well as their scores on the measures of difficulties policing relatives did not have statistically significant effects upon the likelihood of VPSO turnover.

One of the two control variables included in the model for all VPSOs, the measure of whether the officer was married while in the program, was also statistically significant at the .05 level. Those officers who were not married were slightly more than twice as likely to leave the VPSO program in any given month when compared to the officers who were married. The age of the officer at the start of his or her latest VPSO position did not have an effect upon the chance that an officer would quit.

The Turnover Model for Alaska Native VPSOs

A proportional hazards regression model similar to the one used above, was also calculated for the Alaska Native VPSOs (N = 71) as a group apart from the larger group of all VPSOs. Correlations between the 25 independent variables and the dependent variable used for

the model of Alaska Native VPSO turnover are shown in Table 49. With one exception, the variables in this model are the same as that calculated for all VPSOs. The only difference is that the Alaska Native factor score is not included in the model of Alaska Native VPSO turnover. In its place the model uses a categorical measure of whether the Alaska Native officer served in his or her home village.

Seven different variables in the model had a statistically significant impact upon the chances of Alaska Native VPSOs leaving the program. Four of these variables — training satisfaction, use of food stamps, taken extra job, and not married — had relationships that were similar to those found in the model of turnover among all VPSOs. As shown in Table 50, those Alaska Native VPSOs who were satisfied with their training were less likely to leave the program. The Alaska Native officers who used food stamps while a VPSO were nearly four times as likely to leave the program while those who took an extra job during their service to the program were about 65 percent less likely to leave the program. Officers who were not married left the program at a rate nearly three times that of their married counterparts.

Three different variables with statistically significant effects in the model attempting to account for Alaska Native VPSO turnover shown in Table 50 were not statistically significant in the model that considered turnover among all VPSOs. First of all, the dichotomous indicator of whether an Alaska Native officer served in his or her home village had an inverse effect upon the chances of turnover. With all else held equal, Alaska Native VPSOs serving their home villages were 88 percent less likely to leave the program compared to those Alaska Native officers not serving their home villages. The directiveness scale variable, intended as a measure of the degree to which officers have personality characteristics that could be seen as being ‘bossy,’ also had a statistically significant effect upon officer turnover. According to the analysis presented in Table 50, the more directive an officer is, the greater the chance is that he or she would leave the program. There is a 21 percent greater chance of an officer turning over for every one unit increase on the directiveness scale. The other variable with a statistically significant relationship with the hazard rate was the scale that measured the degree to which the Alaska Native officers felt unsafe on the job. However, the direction of this effect was not as predicted by the literature. The officers that report feeling unsafe on the job were actually less likely to leave the program when compared to those officers who did not report such feelings. For every one unit increase

Table 49: Correlation Coefficients for Variables Used in Proportional Hazards Regression Model of the Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all Alaska Native VPSOs Surveyed.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Months worked as a VPSO													
2. Served in home village	.19												
3. Not pressured by relatives	.02	-.09											
4. Difficulties policing relatives	-.02	.20	-.09										
5. Directiveness	-.15	-.07	.22	.11									
6. Training satisfaction	.21	-.22	.24*	-.25*	.14								
7. Community support	.03	-.16	.14	-.23	-.02	.29*							
8. Dissatisfaction with equipment	-.08	.01	-.15	.14	.22	-.37*	-.12						
9. Oversight Trooper contract	-.08	-.08	.19	-.13	.09	-.13	-.08	.06					
10. Oversight Trooper distance	-.04	-.11	-.02	-.12	.04	.05	.09	.08	-.15				
11. Treated as outcast	-.15	-.08	-.21	.30*	.05	-.24*	-.22	.11	-.08	-.06			
12. Pay	.06	.09	.00	.22	.18	.11	.06	.18	.05	-.10	.30*		
13. Job value	-.03	-.12	.13	.16	.26*	-.12	-.24*	.18	.00	-.03	.18	-.11	
14. Housing quality	-.09	-.16	-.10	.03	.02	-.04	-.23	-.05	.02	.16	.09	.01	.04
15. Worked extra job	.35*	.04	.09	.05	.06	-.11	-.10	.01	-.05	.12	-.02	-.03	.21
16. Used food stamps	-.29*	-.08	.01	.07	.14	.00	-.01	.10	-.01	.04	-.01	.02	.10
17. Used welfare	.09	-.13	.03	.19	-.06	.08	-.02	-.10	.07	-.03	-.01	-.16	.13
18. Health effects of stress	.02	.01	-.08	.39*	.19	-.28*	-.32*	.27*	-.11	-.12	.41*	.18	.38*
19. Demands of duty	-.16	.02	-.05	.32*	.13	-.19	-.21	.27*	-.03	-.09	.38*	.31*	.11
20. Role ambiguity	-.06	.05	-.21	.32*	-.22	-.34*	-.10	.15	-.11	-.02	-.10	-.17	-.04
21. Role conflict	.09	-.01	-.04	.21	.10	-.10	-.07	.34*	.11	-.19	.33*	.49*	.00
22. Felt unsafe on job	.10	.10	-.20	.38*	.31*	-.12	-.26*	.25*	-.04	-.01	.26*	.17	.19
23. Ever injured making arrest	.07	-.09	-.08	-.02	.22	.12	-.08	.05	-.02	.29*	.18	-.06	.32*
24. VPOs or tribal police in village	.15	.16	-.01	.16	-.11	.11	-.04	-.25*	-.06	-.17	-.09	.11	.02
25. Not married	.15	-.06	.21	-.03	-.21	.09	.11	-.26*	-.09	-.16	-.10	-.12	-.02
26. Age at start of position	-.18	-.10	.20	-.17	-.10	.06	.12	-.12	.28*	-.05	-.07	-.05	-.30*

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 49: Correlation Coefficients for Variables Used in Proportional Hazards Regression Model of the Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all Alaska Native VPSOs Surveyed (cont.).

Variables	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
1. Months worked as a VPSO												
2. Served in home village												
3. Not pressured by relatives												
4. Difficulties policing relatives												
5. Directiveness												
6. Training satisfaction												
7. Community support												
8. Dissatisfaction with equipment												
9. Oversight Trooper contract												
10. Oversight Trooper distance												
11. Treated as outcast												
12. Pay												
13. Job value												
14. Housing quality												
15. Worked extra job	.20											
16. Used food stamps	.08	-.06										
17. Used welfare	.27*	.06	.38*									
18. Health effects of stress	.16	.27*	.13	.03								
19. Demands of duty	.26*	-.05	.11	.16	.37*							
20. Role ambiguity	-.04	.13	.10	.14	.19	-.01						
21. Role conflict	.13	-.09	-.04	-.03	.32*	.39*	.00					
22. Felt unsafe on job	.01	.23	-.02	-.02	.36*	.40*	-.01	.15				
23. Ever injured making arrest	.05	.09	-.09	-.06	.12	.06	-.08	.14	.25*			
24. VPOs or tribal police in village	-.13	-.04	.17	.28*	-.06	.12	-.02	-.09	.20	.00		
25. Not married	-.17	.00	.22	.23	-.12	.00	.14	.03	-.12	.03	.20	
26. Age at start of position	-.20	-.14	.01	-.04	-.29*	-.26*	.06	-.15	-.31*	-.16	-.01	.23

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 50: Proportional Hazards Model of Individual Variables, Factors, and Scales Upon Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all Alaska Native VPSOs Surveyed.

Type	Variable	B	Sig	Exp(B)
Indicator	Served in Home Village	-2.110	.000	.121
Indicator	Not Pressured by Relatives	-.075	.753	.928
Indicator	Difficulties Policing Relatives	-.237	.236	.789
Scale	Directiveness	.196	.005	1.217
Scale	Training Satisfaction	-.338	.000	.714
Scale	Community Support	.055	.538	1.056
Scale	Dissatisfaction with Equipment	-.018	.905	.982
Factor	Oversight Trooper Contract	.105	.626	1.111
Factor	Oversight Trooper Distance	-.445	.062	.641
Scale	Treated as Outcast	.210	.154	1.234
Factor	Pay	.352	.236	1.422
Scale	Job Value	-.063	.493	.939
Factor	Housing Quality Factor	.251	.316	1.286
Indicator	Used Food Stamps When VPSO	1.359	.015	3.893
Indicator	Gone on Welfare When VPSO	-.885	.422	.413
Indicator	Taken Other Job When VPSO	-1.073	.031	.342
Scale	Health Effects of Stress	.003	.975	1.003
Scale	Demands of Duty	.021	.747	1.021
Scale	Role Ambiguity	.210	.067	1.233
Scale	Role Conflict	-.183	.062	.833
Scale	Felt Unsafe on Job	-.371	.023	.690
Indicator	Ever Injured Making Arrest	-.049	.926	.953
Indicator	VPOs or Tribals Also in Village	-.333	.466	.717
Indicator	Not Married	1.088	.029	2.969
Indicator	Age At Start of Latest Position	-.014	.644	.986

Global $D^2 = 61.303$, 25 d.f., $p = .0001$

on the “feeling unsafe” scale, the Alaska Native VPSOs were 31 percent less likely to leave the program.

The Turnover Model for Non-Native VPSOs

Given the smaller numbers of non-Native VPSOs (N = 41) that responded to the survey, it was necessary use a stepwise proportional hazards regression procedure to calculate a model of turnover that, as a whole, was statistically significant. With a stepwise procedure, predictor (i.e., independent) variables are selected for inclusion based on the magnitude of their association with the dependent variable to create a prediction model. Rather than attempting to enter all predictors into the equation simultaneously, with the stepwise procedure the predictor variable having the strongest statistical association with the dependent variable is entered into the prediction model first, followed by the second strongest predictor variable, and so forth until no more variables can be added to the model without it ceasing to be statistically significant at the .05 alpha level (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). As this stage of the analysis is largely exploratory, a .50 significance level was used as the cut-off criterion for entry and deletion from the model for each of the individual predictors.

A total of 11 predictor variables endured the stepwise procedure resulting in a model that was statistically significant. The correlations among these 11 independent variables and the dependent variable are shown in Table 51. The strength and direction of the effects of the 11 individual independent variables upon VPSO turnover are presented Table 52. Four of these individual variables had a statistically significant association with the turnover of non-Native VPSOs. As with VPSOs generally and with the Alaska Native officers in particular, the non-Native VPSOs who were dissatisfied with their training, who did not work an extra job, and who were not married were more likely to leave the program in any given month. Unlike the other two models, however, the age at the start of the officer’s latest position had a statistically significant effect upon officer turnover. According to the results presented in Table 52, younger VPSOs were at greater risk for leaving the program. Each extra year of age at the start of the position resulted in a five percent reduction of the chance of turnover.

Table 51: Correlation Coefficients for Variables Used in Proportional Hazards Regression Model of the Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all non-Native VPSOs Surveyed.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Months worked as a VPSO											
2. Training satisfaction	.11										
3. Oversight Trooper distance	.05	.07									
4. Treated as outcast	.24	-.08	-.04								
5. Pay	.31*	-.18	.03	.37*							
6. Job value	.23	-.50*	.11	.06	.41*						
7. Worked extra job	.28	-.23	-.04	.19	.34*	.39*					
8. Demands of duty	.18	-.12	-.01	.45*	.63*	.30	.32*				
9. Role conflict	.02	-.41*	-.01	-.03	.22	.10	.17	.17			
10. Felt unsafe on job	.14	-.19	.13	.28	.03	.28	.05	.20	.15		
11. Not married	.05	.17	.28	.01	-.29	.09	-.02	-.28	-.33*	.19	
12. Age at start of latest position	.22	-.14	.04	-.10	.12	.04	.12	.00	-.11	.03	-.09

*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level or below.

Table 52: Proportional Hazards Model of Individual Variables, Factors, and Scales Upon Likelihood of Leaving the VPSO Program for all non-Native VPSOs Surveyed.

Type	Variable	B	Sig	Exp(B)
Scale	Training Satisfaction	-.271	.004	.763
Factor	Oversight Trooper Distance	.327	.228	1.387
Scale	Treated as Outcast	-.292	.235	.747
Factor	Pay	-.356	.265	.687
Scale	Job Value	-.100	.451	.905
Indicator	Taken Other Job When VPSO	-1.244	.031	.288
Scale	Demands of Duty	-.083	.239	.921
Scale	Role Conflict	-.096	.349	.908
Scale	Felt Unsafe on Job	.141	.248	1.151
Indicator	Not Married	1.615	.017	5.026
Indicator	Age At Start of Latest Position	-.052	.029	.949

Global $D^2 = 26.362$, 11 d.f., $p = .0057$

SUMMARY

Variables taken from data gathered in the survey of current and former VPSOs have been used in this chapter to understand why some officers are more likely to leave the program than are others. A two part process was followed to arrive at that understanding. Principal components analysis was used to reduce the large number of variables made available by the survey into a small number of theoretically compelling factors that could then be reasonably compared using proportional hazards regression analysis techniques.

Three different proportional hazards regression models of VPSO turnover were estimated to determine the probabilities of officers leaving the program. The first model considered the likelihood of attrition among all VPSOs while the second and third models looked at the likelihood of turnover among Alaska Native and non-Native VPSOs, respectively. Across all three models a number of factors were found to be closely associated with VPSO turnover. Officers who were dissatisfied with their training, who had not worked an extra job while in the

program, and who were not married were more likely to leave the program at any one point in time. Other factors were important only in some of the models. The use of food stamps while a VPSO, for instance, was related to turnover in the models for all VPSOs and for Alaska Native VPSOs. The model for all VPSOs suggests that being of Alaska Native heritage and serving in a village where other police (such as VPOs or Tribal Police) were present makes officers less likely to leave the program. Among the sub-sample of Alaska Native VPSOs, those who did not serve in their home villages, who were more directive, and who did not report feeling endangered on the job appear to have a greater likelihood of quitting or being terminated. Among the non-Native VPSOs surveyed, those who were younger when hired had a greater chance of leaving the program when compared to their more senior counterparts.

The conclusion that follows in the next chapter examines these findings in terms of the hypotheses regarding VPSO turnover presented earlier in this report. The next chapter also looks at these findings in a more practical light by considering the types of individuals that should be hired as VPSOs and the conditions that will help to insure that they remain with the program.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the proportional hazards regression models presented in the proceeding chapter allow for the confirmation of several hypotheses put forth earlier regarding VPSO turnover. In this concluding chapter those hypotheses are examined in light of the evidence from the regression analysis. By looking at these hypotheses, it is possible to place the findings presented in the previous chapter into the context of practical issues such as an assessment of the types of individuals who should be hired as VPSOs and the conditions that are likely to lead to a VPSO leaving the program. Once these issues are dealt with it is then possible to explore the ramifications of the study's findings in terms of the original goals of the VPSO program, of the difficulties faced by "micro" police departments found in rural areas across the nation, and of the ideals of the community policing philosophy held by many public safety organizations.

HYPOTHESES ON VPSO TURNOVER

The expected reasons, or hypotheses, for VPSO turnover presented in the previous chapter were seen as belonging to one of four larger classes of explanations. First of all were the hypotheses related to VPSO pay, expenses, and housing. Second were the hypotheses associated with officer stress. A third set of hypotheses were those that considered the effects of officers' views of their training and support. Finally, a fourth set of hypotheses looked at impacts of officers' heritage (or lack thereof) as an Alaska Native upon tenure in the program. Based upon the findings of the proportional hazards regression analysis conducted in Chapter 6, it is clear that no single class of explanations is any more compelling than any other class; a few hypotheses within each class of explanations have merit while the majority do not. This section will, within each class of explanations, consider which of the hypotheses have merit and which do not.

Pay, Expenses, and Housing

Both subjective and objective measures of the officers' pay, expenses, and housing were examined as explanations of VPSO turnover. Of these measures, it is the more objective variables which serve to discern the differences between those officers who leave and those who remain with the program. In particular, two objective measures of the economic status of VPSOs serve to distinguish between those officers that remain on the job with those who do not.

The first of these objective measures, whether the officer used food stamps while serving as a VPSO, is directly related to officer turnover. From this measure it is possible to infer that the officers who have a difficult time financially supporting themselves and their families (including the 33 percent of the Alaska Native officers who, as shown Table 16 of Chapter 5, reported using food stamps while serving as a VPSO) are indeed more likely to quit. According to the proportional hazards regression, those officers using food stamps were five times more likely to leave the program in any one month whereas Alaska Native VPSOs who used food stamps were about four times as likely to leave the program when compared to non-food stamp using Alaska Native VPSOs.

The second objective measure of pay, one which asked VPSOs if they had worked an extra job while belonging to the program, is also clearly associated with the likelihood of VPSO turnover. However, the direction of this relationship is opposite that hypothesized earlier in the research. While it was predicted that the officers who had to take an extra job to make ends meet would be more likely to leave the program, the results show that the ‘moonlighting’ VPSOs were actually less likely to quit the program. Indeed, the Alaska Native officers who reported working an extra job while serving as a VPSO had a 65 percent smaller chance of leaving the program in any one month. For all VPSOs, as well as for the sub-sample of non-Native VPSOs, those who took an extra job had a 71 percent smaller chance of quitting.

Although these objective measures of pay and expenses suggest insights into why VPSOs leave their positions, the more subjective measures of dissatisfaction with pay and expenses fail to help us understand the likelihood of officer attrition. In all three of the proportional hazards regression analyses the factors measuring officers’ satisfaction with pay and with housing, as well as the scale measuring the value the officers place on the job, had negligible effect upon the probabilities of VPSO turnover. This is not to say that the officers’ dissatisfaction with their salaries and housing are not important issues but rather that the measures of dissatisfaction taken from the survey of VPSOs do not help us to understand why some officers are more likely to leave the force than are others.

The primary reason for the inability of these subjective measures to predict turnover is that nearly all of the officers — those who stay with the program and those who leave — report being dissatisfied with their pay and expenses (See Table 15 in Chapter 5). As reported in Table 38 in Chapter 5 the top-ranked source of dissatisfaction among officers surveyed from a list of 10

possible sources of dissatisfaction was their low pay. In other words, if everyone is dissatisfied with his or her pay, it is impossible to use that dissatisfaction to predict turnover. Future studies on turnover in situations where there is clearly such a high level of dissatisfaction with the pay issue should seek alternative methods of quantifying that disgruntlement. One such measure might ask respondents to name a salary that they believe captures what they should be paid; those respondents with large differences between actual and desired salaries might be expected to be more likely to leave their jobs.

Stress

Based upon the results of the proportional hazards regression analysis, it would seem as though the stresses inherent in the VPSO position do not explain the rather high levels of turnover in the program. In other words, when all else is held equal, the stresses of being a public safety officer, including the stresses of serving in isolated rural communities, appear to have little to do with the likelihood of VPSOs leaving the program. This is not to say that the VPSO position is without stress. In fact, the survey results presented in Chapter 5 show that, among other things, most officers report experiencing some physiological effects of stress (see Table 22), having faced dangerous situations (see Table 23 and Table 24), and finding the demands of VPSO duty overwhelming (See Table 28).

Nonetheless, these measures of stress do not appear to be associated with VPSO turnover. In the Alaska Native sub-sample, for instance, the effects of the only statistically significant officer stress variable were opposite those hypothesized. Those Alaska Native officers who reported more stress on the “felt unsafe” scale were actually less likely to leave the VPSO program in any given month. Of the seven different measures of stress among the total sample of VPSOs included in the multivariate analyses, only one was a significant predictor of officer turnover. That variable, which measured the presence or absence of other police in the village (i.e., Village Police Officers or Tribal Police Officers), was originally intended as an indicator of the stresses VPSOs felt because of a lack of backup from other officers. In this sense, it would appear that the VPSOs are more likely to leave the program due to what has been characterized elsewhere as perceptions of a lack of personal security (Sandy & Devine, 1978).

However, an alternative interpretation for the meaning of the measure of the presence or absence of other police in the village can be put forth. Instead of viewing that measure as an

indicator of stress, it might be looked at as a measure of the isolation and a lack of camaraderie felt by the officers. As noted by Sandy and Devine (1978), rural police officers are often left without the peer support that is available to police officers in more urbanized areas. Those VPSOs who serve without other police in their village can be seen as facing the worst of this problem. The idea that having someone to work with would make VPSOs less likely to leave is not without merit. Research on the benefits of one-officer versus two-officer patrol cars in San Diego, for instance, certainly made clear that patrol officers would much rather serve in two-officer patrols instead of by themselves (Boydston, Sherry, & Moelter, 1977; Kaplan, 1979). The entrenchment of two-officers-per-patrol arrangements in police collective-bargaining agreements also lends credence to the perceived importance of having someone to work with among the police. Even the Lone Ranger did not work all by himself; he had Tonto. It is not too much of a stretch to expect that VPSOs would also be more satisfied when having someone else to work with.

This idea is even more acceptable when one compares levels of stress reported by those officers serving in villages with additional police presence versus those officers serving in villages without additional police presence. In Table 53 the mean values of three different stress scales for the group of VPSOs serving villages with an additional police presence are compared with the group of VPSOs serving villages without an additional police presence. The group of officers serving where there were other police actually reported higher average scores on the stress scales. A comparison of the scores on individual statements regarding officer stress, as shown in Table 54, were also almost exclusively higher for the VPSOs serving in villages with another officer present when compared to those VPSOs serving where no other officer was present. Together, these tables show that the reported levels of stress were higher for the officers serving where there were other police rather than where there were not other police. Given this, it is more reasonable to see the measure of the presence of other police in the village as being a better indicator of the availability of peer support and camaraderie instead of some measure of stress over a lack of personal security and safety.

Table 53: Mean Scores on Scales Measuring Sources of Stress for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Presence of Other Police in Village of Service.

Scale	Mean Value	
	No Other Police Present in Village	Other Police Present in Village
Health effects of stress	0.32	0.67
Feeling unsafe on job	1.52	2.04
Demands of duty	2.67	4.21

Table 54: Agreement with Statements Regarding Sources of Stress for all VPSOs Surveyed, by Presence of Other Police in Village of Service.

Statement	Percent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Statement	
	No Other Police Present in Village	Other Police Present in Village
Trouble sleeping because of job	61.7	50.0
Health adversely affected because of job	37.7	45.1
Difficulty relaxing because of job	59.0	60.8
Suffer headaches because of job	43.3	46.2
Lucky not to be injured in some of the dangerous situations faced as a VPSO	75.4	84.3
Was put into situations so dangerous that officer feared for own life and safety	67.2	77.6
Unable to take part in community activities because of duty	37.7	54.9
Unable to take vacation because of duty	34.4	37.3
Community expected 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week service	88.5	88.5
Difficult to get time to spend alone with family because of duty	65.0	75.0

Support and Training

Only one of the scales and factors used to measure the VPSOs experiences and perceptions of officer support and training can be seen as being associated with VPSO turnover. Dissatisfaction with VPSO training appears to be one of the leading causes of turnover among the officers surveyed for this study. The scale measuring officers' training satisfaction had an

inverse relationship with the likelihood of leaving the VPSO program in the proportional hazards regression analyses for all officers surveyed and for the sub-samples of Alaska Native and non-Native officers. When all other variables are held equal, those officers that were less than satisfied with their training were more likely to leave the program when compared with the officers with a greater level of satisfaction with their training. Whether the officer felt like an outcast or unappreciated by the village does not appear to have an impact upon increasing the likelihood of an officer leaving the program.

It is important to note, however, that the majority of officers surveyed for this study reported being satisfied with the training they had received. In Table 14 in Chapter 5 it was shown that only about one-third of the VPSOs were dissatisfied with their training, more than half felt that they were well trained, and a similar proportion said that the academy had prepared them well for the job at hand. The main negative view of VPSO training held by a strong majority of officers (over two thirds) was that the training did not prepare them for many things they do on their job. Given the broad range of duties expected of and performed by VPSOs (Wood & Trostle, 1997), it might not be possible to train them for everything they come up against in their day-to-day duties.

Although dissatisfaction with training appears to be a factor strongly associated with VPSO turnover, it is difficult to determine reasons why that dissatisfaction would make officers more likely to leave the program. It is possible that these officers genuinely feel that the training does not prepare them adequately for the job which, in turn, really does make it difficult for them to do their job. In this sense, those in charge of VPSO training would be well advised to examine the actual day-to-day activities of VPSOs and to center the training around those activities. On the other hand, the causal mechanism by which officer dissatisfaction with training leads to turnover might be more circuitous. It is conceivable that VPSO training prepares the officers as well as any training possibly could and that the dissatisfaction with training is more of a reflection of officers' dissatisfaction with, and animosity toward, the program administrators responsible for that training. From the open-ended portions of the survey, as well as from conversations between the researcher and a number of officers, there is anecdotal evidence that some VPSOs feel a great deal of animosity and resentment toward the Alaska State Troopers and the regional non-profit corporations. Because the survey did not ask the officers for their opinions of the troopers or the non-profits, their dissatisfaction with those

who supervise them might be indirectly expressed as aversion toward their training. Future research on the perceptions of VPSOs would most likely benefit from an examination of their sources of dissatisfaction that is grounded in qualitative interview and focus group data gathering methods.

Alaska Native Heritage

Contrary to the hypothesis put forth earlier in this report, it appears as though the likelihood of turnover among VPSOs of Alaska Native heritage is actually less than it is for non-Native VPSOs. The more entrenched an officer is in the Alaska Native milieu, the less likely the officer is to quit the program. Being an Alaska Native, coming from an Alaska Native village and family, serving in a home village, and being related to other village residents are all characteristics that are associated with remaining in the program.

The effects of the other variables that consider the experiences of Alaska Native VPSOs are more difficult to interpret. For instance, when the results for the entire sample of VPSOs are examined, officers with high scores on the measure of directiveness (i.e., “bossiness”) were just as likely to leave the program as were those officers with low scores. However, when that same measure is examined for the sub-sample of Alaska Native VPSOs, being too directive appears to put officers at a greater risk of leaving the program. Another finding that was contrary to what was hypothesized, given the supposed pressures of having to enforce the law against ones’ relations, is that the Alaska Native VPSOs who serve their home villages are actually less likely to turnover when compared with officers from outside the village. However, this finding becomes less surprising when one considers that the likelihood of turnover was not affected by the officers’ perceptions of the difficulties of policing relatives.

A REVISED UNDERSTANDING OF VPSO TURNOVER

None of the larger classes of explanations — poor pay, officer stress, lack of support, or Alaska Native heritage — provide a compelling explanation for the tremendous amount of turnover in the VPSO program. While each contributes a piece to the puzzle, no one type of explanation helps us to fully understand why so many VPSOs are leaving the program at such a rapid rate. However, when the relationships between turnover and some of the specific variables that do exist are examined, a different perspective emerges. Specifically, these individual

relationships point to an overarching explanation of VPSO turnover which argues that the officers who have connections to others and to life in an Alaska Native village are those that are least likely to leave the program. It is possible to look at some of the significant relationships identified in the previous chapter to see how they lead to the conclusion that strong connections to others in their villages and to Alaska Native culture are associated with VPSOs sticking with the program.

The relationship between officer turnover and the control variable measuring whether the officer was married is the first to provide support for the argument that higher levels of officer connection are associated with a decreased likelihood of VPSO turnover. In all three of the analyses conducted above, those officers who were not married were much more likely to leave the program at any one time. This finding is of little surprise when one considers that marriage is a good indicator of individual stability and is indicative of attachment to at least one other person. Research on criminal behavior (Mande & English, 1987; Wright & Wright, 1992) and corrections (Gorta & Cooney, 1983; Liberton, Silverman, & Blount, 1992; Virginia Department of Corrections, 1988) certainly underscores the idea that marriage is a stabilizing influence.

The second point of support for the assertion that those officers with strong levels of connection will be the ones most likely to remain with the program is the finding that the officers who worked an extra job while serving as a VPSO were actually much less likely to leave the program at any one point in time. The very idea that these officers would be committed enough to do what was necessary to continue to live in the village and to remain with the program that they would take on an additional job can certainly be interpreted as being indicative of a deep sense of connection. Given the perceived stresses of the job, it is fair to assume that there is something attaching the officers that would have them not only remain in the program but also have additional employment in order to do so.

The finding that VPSOs serving in villages where other police are present also lends credence to the idea that officers with strong connections to others in the village will be less likely to leave. As established in the section above, the reason why VPSOs serving in villages with an additional police presence are less likely to leave the program probably has little to do with the stresses of policing. Instead, these officers who are not the sole police presence in their community are probably more likely to remain with the program because of the camaraderie and companionship afforded by having someone else to work with. This 'having someone else to

work with’ can be seen as yet another connection that would make VPSOs much more likely to continue in their positions.

Perhaps the most compelling support for the idea that the VPSOs with the strongest connections to others in their villages will be the ones least likely to leave the program comes from the findings regarding the likelihood of turnover among VPSOs of Alaska Native heritage. As was shown in the previous chapter, those officers that scored the highest on a measure of Alaska Native heritage were less prone to turnover when compared to those officers with lower scores on that measure. The variables comprising the measure of Alaska Native heritage — whether the officer was Alaska Native, came from an Alaska Native village and family, served in his or her home village, and was related to other village residents — can each be seen as a proxy of the degree to which officers are connected to the village they serve. It is reasonable to presume that, on average, Alaska Native VPSOs would be more connected to the village than non-Native VPSOs. Likewise, those VPSOs who come from an Alaska Native village and family would feel more connected than those officers who did not. The officers serving in their home villages and serving where they are related to others most certainly could be viewed as having stronger connections than other officers. Even among the Alaska Native officers themselves it was shown that those serving in their home villages were much more likely to remain VPSOs when compared to the Alaska Native officers not serving in their home villages.

In one sense, this idea that the VPSOs with the greater connections to a village and to others in it will be more likely to remain with the program is a more positive way of looking at the turnover problem. Instead of trying to develop multiple explanations for why VPSOs quit, it is probably more fruitful to turn the issue on its head to try to find explanations for why these officers “hang in there.” Doing so helps to show that there are indeed reasons to be a VPSO.

This tentative interpretation combining the significant relationships identified in the multivariate analysis of officer attrition certainly bears additional examination. Future research on officer turnover, especially that which examines turnover in rural police, should give due consideration to the extent and quality of connections and attachments officers have within their community and primary social groups.

A LARGER VIEW OF VPSO TURNOVER

Ultimately, an understanding of VPSO turnover is important on a number of fronts. Knowing why some officers are more likely to leave the program, or, conversely, why they are likely not to leave, certainly can be helpful in the recruitment and hiring process as well as in the overall administration of the program. On a broader note, however, understanding the reasons for VPSO turnover provides some insights into a number of other issues. First of all, the idea that those officers who have stronger connections within the village and smaller social groupings are the ones most likely to remain with the program adds credence in some ways to the earliest conceptions of the program. This finding provides insights as to the types of officers that should be considered for employment in the micro-sized police departments found across the nation. The finding that the officers with the strongest connections to their village are the ones that last the longest in the program also provides some insights into the viability of community policing as a method of crime prevention in rural areas.

Original Philosophy of the VPSO Program

As originally conceived, the VPSO program was set up as a local way to provide public safety services in Alaska Native villages. One of the key points of its original philosophy was that local decision making and local control be a cornerstone of the program so that the needs and concerns of individual villages would be best served (Messick, 1979). The idea that the VPSOs who have the strongest connections to the villages they are serving are the ones that are least likely to leave fits well with this original philosophy of the program.

In regards to local control of the program, having VPSOs with strong connections to the villages they serve is beneficial for a number of reasons. First of all, those VPSOs who have a close attachment to their villages are probably more likely to have a good understanding of the leadership structure of the villages they serve. Multiple jurisdictions (e.g., local, state, and tribal) within each village make it necessary for public servants such as VPSOs to understand the various competing interests held by these jurisdictions. In addition, it is helpful for these public servants to be familiar not only with the formal leaders, but also the informal leaders of the village. Those VPSOs with strong attachments to the villages they serve would be expected to have greater familiarities in both the different types of jurisdictions and leaders. Another reason why closely connected VPSOs help to increase local control over public safety matters is that

they have more at stake when exercising their authority and therefore are more likely to make their decisions consistent with the attitudes of local leadership. Because they are closely connected to others in the village through culture, family, or marriage, it is not to their benefit to make decisions that are contrary to the desires of the members of the local power structures. Since these officers will continue to live in the village where they serve, they are probably more likely to make decisions that are for the benefit of all involved rather than based upon external notions of operation. In addition to it being to the officer's own benefit to make decisions that go along with the views of local leadership, those officers with close connections to the village they are serving are also more likely to have respect for local leadership and therefore be more deferential to their viewpoints.

"Micro" Police Departments

The findings of this research, especially the idea that closely connected officers are the ones least likely give up their jobs as VPSOs, also have ramifications for our understanding of what Bass (1995) terms the "micro" police departments. These small-town departments, with staffs of anywhere from 1 to 10 officers, are estimated to make up anywhere from 50 to 80 percent of all police departments in the country (Bass, 1995). The VPSO program, organized with single officers serving villages by themselves or in cooperation with VPOs or Tribal Police (as is the case with 46 % of the officers surveyed), in at least one way can be seen as being structured much like these micro departments.

For the most part, these smaller police departments have been neglected in police research (Walker, 1995). Those who conduct research on rural policing (e.g., Bartol, 1996) often bemoan the fact that nearly all police research is based upon a relatively small number of large, metropolitan departments whereas the large majority of police departments are quite small in terms of the number of personnel. Some have even argued that "there is an urban bias in research efforts concerning police organizations, management, operations, and methods in America" (Weisheit, Wells & Falcone, 1999, p. 97).

One of the major issues these micro-departments face, a problem that does not exist for the larger metropolitan departments that are the grist for most police research, is the problem of officer turnover. One author (Hoffman, 1993) refers to officer turnover as "the plague of small agencies." For instance, all of the police chiefs of micro-departments in Oklahoma interviewed

by Bass (1995) were of the opinion that officer turnover was a major problem for their organizations. As established in chapter 3, the VPSO program shares this problem with these micro-departments.

Not surprisingly, the research on turnover in small town and micro-departments also points to the idea of officers with the strongest connections being those least likely to leave a department. These departments seem especially troubled by officers who use the training and experience they gain while employed in a small police force “as a springboard to further a police career” (Bass, 1995, p. 65) by moving on to larger departments. Some of the small-town chiefs of police interviewed by Hoffman (1993) took steps to find officers that were connected to the town they were working in or to help officers to establish such connections. For example, one department would only hire officers who were in their mid-20s or older because these officers were seen as being much more stable. The chiefs in a couple of other departments encouraged their officers to purchase homes in the towns they served so as to increase their likelihood of remaining with their departments (Hoffman, 1993). The findings regarding VPSOs in this study provide empirical support for the anecdotal views of these police administrators that having officers that are connected to the town will reduce turnover.

Community Policing

Although it was implemented a number of years before community policing became fashionable, the VPSO program has been recognized by some (Marenin, 1989a; 1990; Wood & Trostle, 1997) as an example of a community policing program. As Marenin (1989a) argued, different aspects of the program’s organizational structure — including a decentralized authority structure, a generalist conception of the policing role, mixed responsibilities to state and traditional social controls, and the participation of the community — serve to differentiate the program from the more traditional forms of reactive police service delivery. That officers who appear to be better connected to others in the villages they serve are the ones that are least likely to leave certainly is a positive finding when viewed from a community policing perspective.

The concept of “community policing” is difficult to define. Police scholars and practitioners have differing perceptions of what it means. However, aside from the philosophic, programmatic, and managerial underpinnings, most would agree that community policing involves efforts aimed at increasing communication between citizens and the police. “At its

most basic level, community policing involves partnerships between citizens and law enforcement agents” in which “favorable citizen-police interactions beyond those that the police usually maintain (citizen as complainant, citizen as victim, or citizen as criminal)” are developed (Thurman & McGarrell, 1997, p. 2). It is to the benefit of the VPSO program, as an effort in community policing, that the officers with the strongest connections are the ones to stay with the program the longest because they should be the officers who would be able to best communicate with others in the village.

When compared with those who can be considered to be more “outsiders,” those VPSOs with stronger roots in the village and in the culture have a number of advantages in terms of being able to communicate with those being served by the program. Those officers with strong connections, particularly those policing their home villages, are more likely to have reasons beyond purely law enforcement for communicating with village residents. The officer may have grown up with those he or she is serving. The officer’s children would be going to school with the children of the other residents. The officer might take part in activities, such as subsistence hunting, in which other village residents take part. Each of these things, as well as many others, would give the well-connected officer grounds for conversing with others regarding non-enforcement issues. Not only is the well-connected VPSO likely to have more occasions for communicating with village residents, but he or she is also more likely to have a better understanding of how to communicate with them. The officers with close connections to the villages they serve are probably more likely to communicate in a fashion that is respectful of the shared cultural values held by the officer and by the village residents. In short, being rooted in the community and culture gives the officer and the village residents common grounds on which to communicate and allows the officer to communicate with village residents in a fashion that is respectful toward locally held values.

A FINAL POINT

Alaska’s Village Public Safety Officer program is an innovation in the delivery of public safety services that attempts to meet the needs of the geographically-isolated, sparsely-populated Alaska Native villages scattered across the state. Among agencies with the responsibility of law enforcement, the VPSO program is indeed unique. Given the track record of past innovations in the delivery of police services, the high rates of turnover in the VPSO program should not be

unexpected. The Metropolitan Police of London, an early innovations in policing, had a tremendous turnover problem when it first began. According to Shpayer-Makov (1990), only 862 of the original 3,400 men who joined the “Bobbies” when the department was first established in 1829 were still with the department four years later. In fact, it wasn’t until the mid-1870s, almost half a century later, that the turnover among the London police reached a rate that is similar to that found in metropolitan police forces in Britain and the U.S. today (Shpayer-Makov, 1990). Another innovative police organization, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, also had very high turnover rates when it was in its infancy. During the days when its mission was to bring law and order to the Canadian prairies, more than half of the 150 men originally recruited by the “Mounties” in 1873 for that purpose had left the force by the end of 1875 (Morgan, 1973). It wasn’t until the turn of the century, when the force (then named the Royal North-West Mounted Police) began to take on provincial policing responsibilities, that its turnover problem was alleviated (Griffiths & Verdun-Jones, 1989).

The lesson to be drawn from the early experiences of these most famous of police organizations is that the turnover problem can be dealt with effectively. With time and through a concerted effort, it is possible to reduce the number of VPSOs leaving the program. Given the findings of this research, the key to making such a reduction appears to be in finding those individuals who are connected to their home villages through marriage, family, and culture.

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APPENDIX 1: VPSO TRAINING ACADEMY SCHEDULE, JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2000

Sunday 2	Monday 3	Tuesday 4	Wednesday 5	Thursday 6	Friday 7	Saturday 8
8am Students Arrive	8am Police Ethics and Conduct Cpl. Lamica 11am PT	8am Defensive Tactics	8am Defensive Tactics	8am Defensive Tactics	8am Defensive Tactics FINAL PRACTICAL	8am-10am Weekly Testing
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm Orientation Class Equipment Issue Initial PT test How to Study	1pm Use of Force Cpl. Barrick	1pm Defensive Tactics	1pm Defensive Tactics	1pm Defensive Tactics	1pm OCAT	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	*****

VPSO ACADEMY #27

January 2000

Sunday 9	Monday 10	Tuesday 11	Wednesday 12	Thursday 13	Friday 14	Saturday 15
8am	8am ASP Baton Cpl. Barrick	8am Notebooks, Dispatch cards Sgt. Dekreon	8am Report Writing Sgt. Dekreon	8am Criminal Complaints Sgt. Dekreon	8am Medic First Aid and CPR	8am-10am Weekly Testing
		11am PT	11am PT	11am PT		
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm ASP Baton Cp. Barrick	1pm Report Writing Sgt. Dekreon	1pm Report Writing Sgt. Dekreon	1pm Criminal Complaints Sgt. Dekreon	1pm Medic First Aid and CPR	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

VPSO ACADEMY #27

January 2000

Sunday 16	Monday 17	Tuesday 18	Wednesday 19	Thursday 20	Friday 21	Saturday 23
8am	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am-11am Fire Training Mid Term Exam
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

VPSO ACADEMY #27

January 2000

Sunday 24	Monday 25	Tuesday 26	Wednesday 27	Thursday 28	Friday 29	Saturday 30
8am	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am Fire Training	8am-11am Fire Training Final Exam/ Critique
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Fire Training	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

VPSO ACADEMY #27 **January / February 2000**

Sunday 31	Monday 1	Tuesday 2	Wednesday 3	Thursday 4	Friday 5	Saturday 6
8am	8am Crime Scene Investigations Inv. C. Harris Tpr. Graham	8am Crime Scene Investigations Inv. C. Harris Tpr. Graham	8am Drug Identification Sgt. Ray Culbreath	8am Search & Seizure Louis Menendez	8am Criminal Code Sgt. Dekreon	8am-10am Weekly Testing
	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm Crime Scene Investigations Inv. C. Harris Tpr. Graham	1pm Crime Scene Investigations Inv. C. Harris Tpr. Graham	1pm Search & Seizure Louis Menendez	1pm Miranda Sgt. Dekreon	1pm Criminal Code Sgt. Dekreon	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

VPSO ACADEMY #27**February 2000**

Sunday 7	Monday 8	Tuesday 9	Wednesday 10	Thursday 11	Friday 12	Saturday 13
8am	8am Sexual Assault Investigations Inv. (CIB)	8am Domestic Violence Investigations Inv. (CIB)	8am Domestic Violence Reports Inv. (CIB)	8am Emergency Guard Hire / Holding Cell Procedures VPSO D. Fox 10am Title 47 Procedures VPSO Fox	8am VPSOs & the Criminal Justice System VPSO D. Fox 9:30am Rural Patrol Procedures VPSO Active 11am PT	8am-10am Weekly Testing
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm Sexual Assault Investigations Inv. (CIB)	1pm Domestic Violence Investigations Inv. (CIB)	1pm Domestic Violence Reports Inv. (CIB)	1pm Defensive Tactics Review	1pm Juvenile Procedures Cpl.Lamica	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

VPSO ACADEMY #27

February 2000

Sunday 14	Monday 15	Tuesday 16	Wednesday 17	Thursday 18	Friday 19	Saturday 20
8am	8am Search & Rescue Cpl. Lamica	8am Search & Rescue Cpl. Lamica	8am Stress Management Chaplain Norman	8am DWI Investigations Sgt. Lee Oly	8am DWI Investigations Sgt. Lee Oly	8am-10am Weekly Testing
	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm Search & Rescue Cpl. Lamica	1pm Search & Rescue Cpl. Lamica	1pm Stress Management Chaplain Norman	1pm DWI Investigations Sgt. Lee Oly	1pm DWI Investigations Sgt. Lee Oly	1pm Personal Time
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

VPSO ACADEMY #27**February 2000**

Sunday 21	Monday 22	Tuesday 23	Wednesday 24	Thursday 25	Friday 26	
8am	8am Cold Water Survival Cpl. Lamica	8am Professional Police Communications Verbal Judo Cpl. Lamica	8am DFYS Overview Lt. Brown	8am Review for Final Exam Staff and TAC Officers	8am STUDENTS Evaluations Counseling 10am Preparation for Graduation & Practice	
	11am PT	11am PT	11am PT	11am Study Hall		
Lunch 12 noon						
1pm	1pm Cold Water Survival Pool Session 1 1/2 - 2 hrs.	1pm Community Policing Lt.Cole (APD)	1pm Alcohol & Drug Interdiction WAANT Unit	1pm Final Exam 3pm Final PT Test Equipment Turn-in	1pm Graduation Exercise 3pm Clean up & Inspect building 5pm Departure	
Dinner 5:00 pm						
*****	*****	Curfew 2000 HRS	*****	*****	*****	

Source: Officer In Charge of VPSO Training, Alaska State Troopers.

APPENDIX 2: VPSO QUESTIONNAIRES

Survey of Turnover Among Alaska Village Public Safety Officers
[Current Officers]

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING THE SURVEY.

1. Answer each question as honestly as possible.
2. Do not write your name anywhere on this survey.
3. The questions ask about your experiences and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers. Please complete the questionnaire by yourself, without consulting others.
4. There are three types of questions.

Closed questions are followed by answers for you to choose from. Check the box next to the answer you choose. Choose only one answer unless the instructions say otherwise. For example:

1. How many people live in your village?

☐ less than 50

☐ between 201 and 300

☐ between 51 and 100

☐ between 301 and 400

☐ between 101 and 200

☐ more than 400

If there were 175 people living in your village, you would check or fill in the box before the answer "between 101 and 200"

Opinion questions are statements that have fixed answers for you to choose from. Circle the answer that most closely matches your opinion about the statement and the strength of that opinion. In other words, circle whether you "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", or "strongly disagree" with the statement or whether you "don't know" what your opinion is. Circle only one answer. For example:

1. VPSO uniforms are uncomfortable.

Strongly
Agree

Agree

Don't Know

Disagree

Strongly
Disagree

If you felt that the VPSO uniforms were very uncomfortable, you would circle the "Strongly Agree" answer. On the other hand, if you thought VPSO uniforms were comfortable, you would circle that you "Disagree" with the statement.

Open questions are followed by blank spaces for you to provide specific information or to write your answer in your own words. For example:

1. How many arrests have you made as a VPSO? _____

If you have made 23 arrests as a VPSO, you would enter that number in the space provided.

5. If you feel that a question does not apply to you, do not answer it. For example, you will find that some questions are designed specially for Alaska Native VPSOs. If you are not an Alaska Native, do not answer those questions.
6. After you have completed the survey place it in the postage paid envelope and mail it to Dr. Wood at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

TURN THE PAGE TO BEGIN THE SURVEY.

We are interested in your motivations for becoming a VPSO and your opinion on VPSO training. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

1. I became a VPSO because I saw it as a good job to start a career in law enforcement.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. I became a VPSO because the village I lived in needed someone to take the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. I became a VPSO because I was unemployed and I needed a job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. I became a VPSO because I saw it as a way to make money to support subsistence activities.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I became a VPSO because I wanted to move to, and live in, rural Alaska.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I became a VPSO because I thought it would be an interesting or exciting way to make a living.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. I feel that I am well trained for the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. There are many things that VPSO training has not prepared me for.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. VPSO training academy has prepared me for what I have to do on the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. I am not satisfied with the training I received to be a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We are interested in your opinion about VPSO salaries and housing conditions. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

11. I am not paid very well as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. As a VPSO, I earn more than other people in the village who have full time jobs.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. I have no problem "making ends meet" on my VPSO salary.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. VPSOs make much less than the job is worth.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. My housing costs are very expensive.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16. Compared to others in the village I am a VPSO in, I pay a great deal for my housing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. Compared to other houses in the village I am a VPSO in, the house I live in is in poor condition.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. I am satisfied with the quality of housing I live in.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The next questions deal with your experiences as a day-to-day VPSO. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

19. I am always clear about what I have to do as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20. I am always clear about the limits of my authority as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. I am always clear about what people expect of me as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. Sometimes people around me have different opinions about what I should be doing as a VPSO and how I should be doing it.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23. Many times the local government officials tell me to do one thing while my oversight trooper tells me to do something else.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24. Many times the local government officials tell me to do one thing while the VPSO coordinator tells me to do something else.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. Many times the VPSO coordinator tells me to do one thing while my oversight trooper tells me to do something else.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26. My oversight trooper calls me on the telephone quite often just to check on how things are going for me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27. My oversight trooper visits my village only in case of emergency or an investigation.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28. People treat me like I am somehow less of a Native Alaskan when I became a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29. People treated me like an outcast in the community when I became a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30. I often have trouble sleeping.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31. My health is adversely affected by my job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32. My job makes me feel tense and I have difficulties relaxing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33. I often suffer headaches because of my job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
34. I am lucky that I have not been injured in some of the dangerous situations I responded to.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35. I have been put into situations so dangerous that I feared for my life and safety.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We would also like to know about your experiences in the village when you were a VPSO. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

36. It is difficult for me to go hunting or fishing because I have to be on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. I can not afford the expense of hunting or fishing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
38. I am unable to go hunting or fishing for more than one week at a time because I have to be on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39. I am unable to take part in community activities because I have to be on call or on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40. I am unable to take a vacation because I have to be on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
41. The community expects me to do my job 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
42. I find it difficult to get the time to spend alone with my family.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
43. My relatives have not pressured me to be lenient toward them..	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44. It is difficult enforcing the law against people that I am related to.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45. I do not have the equipment I need to do my job as a VPSO properly.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
46. I receive little assistance in obtaining the equipment I need to do my job properly.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47. The office space provided me is adequate for the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48. The community supports me as the VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49. People let me know that they appreciate the job I am doing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50. People tell me that they want me to continue to be a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51. I am satisfied with the opportunities for promotion as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52. The VPSO job is a "dead end" job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

These next questions deal with officer safety and availability of backup. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

53. Have you ever been injured while making an arrest as a VPSO? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 56)

54. If yes, how many times have you been injured while making an arrest? _____

55. Did any of your injuries require medical attention? ☐ Yes ☐ No

56. As a VPSO, have you ever responded to a situation where a perpetrator was using, or threatening to use, a firearm? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 59)

57. If yes, how many times did you have to deal with a perpetrator using or threatening to use firearm? _____

58. Were shots fired by any of these perpetrators? ☐ Yes ☐ No

59. As a VPSO, have you ever responded to a situation dealing with a perpetrator who was using, or threatening to use, a weapon other than a firearm? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 62)

60. If yes, how many times did you have to deal with a perpetrator who was using, or threatening to use, a weapon other than a firearm? _____

61. Did the any of these perpetrators actually use the weapon to injure either you or someone else involved in the situation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

62. Are there also other police officers such as VPOs or tribal police in the village that you are a VPSO in? ☐ Yes ☐ No

63. How often do you talk to your oversight trooper on the telephone?
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every three months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a month | |

64. How often do you see your oversight trooper in person?
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every three months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a month | |

65. The nearest state trooper posting is how far away from the village that you are a VPSO in?
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 25 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 150 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 50 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> 151 to 200 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 51 to 75 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 200 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 76 to 100 miles | |

66. In good weather, how long would it take the state troopers to travel to the village where you are a VPSO?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 30 minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> Between 2 hours and 4 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between 30 minutes and 1 hour | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between 1 hour and 2 hours | |

The next questions are about having to deal with relatives while a VPSO. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

67. Are any of the villages you have been a VPSO in also a village where you grew up? ☐ Yes ☐ No

68. Are you related to people in the villages that you have been a VPSO? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 71)

69. Have you ever arrested or taken into custody someone who is related to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 71)

70. Of the relatives that you have arrested, who was the most closely related to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> One of your parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Your niece or nephew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your brother or sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Your first cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your son or daughter | <input type="checkbox"/> Your second cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your aunt or uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone else you consider to be a relative |

71. Have you ever transferred from your home village to be a VPSO in another village? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 73)

72. Compared to your home village, how is the job of VPSO in the village you transferred to?

- ☐ It is easier being a VPSO in the village I transferred to.
- ☐ There was little to no difference between being a VPSO in my home village or in the village I transferred to.
- ☐ It is more difficult being a VPSO in the village I transferred to.

73. Did you ever resign your VPSO position and then, once again, become a VPSO? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 75)

74. In your own words, explain why you decided to re-join the VPSO program.

This next question asks for your opinion about problems facing VPSOs.

75. Below is a list common complaints or sources of dissatisfaction about being a VPSO. We would like you to rank these complaints in order from what you think is the biggest source of dissatisfaction to what you think is the smallest source of dissatisfaction. Put a '1' next to what you believe is the biggest source of dissatisfaction. Then put a '2' next to what you think is the second biggest source of dissatisfaction; and so on. Put a '10' next to what you believe is the smallest complaint. No ties, please.

- | | |
|--|--|
| _____ Low pay and benefits. | _____ Facing dangerous situations unarmed. |
| _____ Poor training. | _____ Lacking backup in dangerous situations. |
| _____ Little chance of promotion. | _____ Inability to hunt or fish when necessary. |
| _____ Too many "bosses" to satisfy. | _____ Little support in the village for the VPSO. |
| _____ Uncertainty about powers and duties. | _____ Being 'on call' 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. |

These next questions deal with your views on the role of police in society. How much do you agree or disagree with

the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

76. Police should restrict their activities to enforcing the law and fighting crime.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77. Making an arrest is not usually the best way to solve a problem.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
78. Spending time talking to ordinary citizens is good police work.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79. The highest priority for the police is whatever problem disturbs the community the most.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
80. Maintaining peace and order between people is just as important as catching criminals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
81. To be effective the police should be involved in all community problems, not just crime-related problems.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
82. Enforcing the law in society is the most important job of the police.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
83. The best way to measure police efficiency is by detection and arrest rates.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
84. Too much police time is wasted on dealing with the petty problems of citizens.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The following questions are designed to give us an understanding of your administrative style. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

85. I have no particular desire to be the leader of a group.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
86. I am usually the one who initiates activities in my group.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
87. I shy away from situations where I might be asked to take charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
88. I work best in a group when I'm the person in charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
89. I would avoid a job that required me to supervise other people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
90. I seek positions where I can influence others.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
91. I let others take the lead when I am on a committee.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
92. In an emergency, I get people organized and take charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The next questions deal with your viewpoints on police work. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

93. Police work is exciting most of the time.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
94. Police work makes it difficult to lead a normal life.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
95. Police work enables you to use virtually all your talents and special skills.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
96. Police work gets respect from most citizens.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
97. Police work is a good way to help people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
98. Police work often results in an officer getting caught up in local 'politics'.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

These next questions deal with your personal approach to policing. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

99. I have freedom to make my own decisions and police my own way.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
100. I spend a lot of time getting to know people in the community.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
101. I prefer to use methods other than arrest to deal with policing problems in the community.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
102. I find that being verbally or physically aggressive helps a lot in law enforcement.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
103. I try to police in ways that minimize the need for backup assistance.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
104. I get much assistance and collaboration from community residents.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
105. I work a lot with community agencies and services.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
106. I am likely to give a person a break or a second chance when they committed a minor crime.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
107. I believe police officers should stick together and not discuss police problems with outsiders.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
108. Sometimes I find it useful to detain a person for several hours without laying any formal charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
109. My style of policing native villages is different from the approach used in non-native villages.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We would like to know more about your perceptions of your work in terms that have been used to describe the job situation in a number of different work environments. This will allow us to compare your situation with those in other situations.

For the following terms or statements circle YES if the item describes each particular aspect of the job (work, pay, etc.), NO if the item does not describe that aspect, or UNDECIDED if you are unsure. (Some of the terms may seem a bit "strange," but remember that they were chosen because they apply in a broad range of jobs. These next questions deal with your personal approach to policing.

YOUR WORK

• Fascinating	Yes	No	Undecided
• Routine	Yes	No	Undecided
• Satisfying	Yes	No	Undecided
• Boring	Yes	No	Undecided
• Good	Yes	No	Undecided
• Creative	Yes	No	Undecided
• Respected	Yes	No	Undecided
• Hot	Yes	No	Undecided
• Pleasant	Yes	No	Undecided
• Useful	Yes	No	Undecided
• Tiresome	Yes	No	Undecided
• Healthful	Yes	No	Undecided
• Challenging	Yes	No	Undecided
• On your feet	Yes	No	Undecided
• Frustrating	Yes	No	Undecided
• Simple	Yes	No	Undecided
• Endless	Yes	No	Undecided
• Gives sense of accomplishment	Yes	No	Undecided

YOUR SUPERVISORS

• Asks my advice	Yes	No	Undecided
• Hard to please	Yes	No	Undecided
• Impolite	Yes	No	Undecided
• Praises good work	Yes	No	Undecided
• Tactful	Yes	No	Undecided
• Influential	Yes	No	Undecided
• Up-to-date	Yes	No	Undecided
• Don't supervise enough	Yes	No	Undecided
• Quick tempered	Yes	No	Undecided
• Tells me where I stand	Yes	No	Undecided
• Annoying	Yes	No	Undecided
• Stubborn	Yes	No	Undecided
• Knows job well	Yes	No	Undecided
• Bad	Yes	No	Undecided
• Intelligent	Yes	No	Undecided
• Leaves me on my own	Yes	No	Undecided
• Lazy	Yes	No	Undecided
• Around when needed	Yes	No	Undecided

YOUR PAY

• Income adequate for normal expenses	Yes	No	Undecided
• Barely live on income	Yes	No	Undecided
• Bad	Yes	No	Undecided
• Income provides luxuries	Yes	No	Undecided
• Insecure	Yes	No	Undecided
• Less than I deserve	Yes	No	Undecided
• Highly paid	Yes	No	Undecided
• Underpaid	Yes	No	Undecided

PROMOTIONS

• Good opportunity for advancement	Yes	No	Undecided
• Opportunity somewhat limited	Yes	No	Undecided
• Promotion on ability	Yes	No	Undecided
• Dead-end job	Yes	No	Undecided
• Good chance for promotion	Yes	No	Undecided
• Unfair promotion policy	Yes	No	Undecided
• Infrequent promotions	Yes	No	Undecided
• Regular promotions	Yes	No	Undecided
• Fairly good chance for promotion	Yes	No	Undecided

THOSE YOU WORK WITH DAILY

• Stimulating	Yes	No	Undecided
• Boring	Yes	No	Undecided
• Slow	Yes	No	Undecided
• Ambitious	Yes	No	Undecided
• Stupid	Yes	No	Undecided
• Responsible	Yes	No	Undecided
• Fast	Yes	No	Undecided
• Intelligent	Yes	No	Undecided
• Easy to make enemies	Yes	No	Undecided
• Talk too much	Yes	No	Undecided
• Smart	Yes	No	Undecided
• Lazy	Yes	No	Undecided
• Unpleasant	Yes	No	Undecided
• No privacy	Yes	No	Undecided
• Active	Yes	No	Undecided
• Narrow interests	Yes	No	Undecided
• Loyal	Yes	No	Undecided
• Hard to meet	Yes	No	Undecided

This next group of questions requests demographic information that will help us to compare your responses to others' responses. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

110. Of the following, which one category best describes your race or ethnicity?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aleut | <input type="checkbox"/> Haida | <input type="checkbox"/> Tsimshian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian. | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athabascan | <input type="checkbox"/> Iñupiaq | <input type="checkbox"/> Yupik |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

111. What is your sex? ☐ Male ☐ Female

112. What is your date of birth? _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

113. What is your place of birth? _____
City State Country

114. What is your current annual income?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 to \$5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,001 to \$30,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,001 to \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,001 to \$35,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,001 to \$15,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,001 to \$40,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,001 to \$20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001 to \$45,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,001 to \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$45,001 or more |

115. What is your marital status?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced, remarried |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married (and never divorced) | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/Separated, not remarried | |

116. Were you raised in an Alaska Native family? ☐ Yes ☐ No

117. Were you raised in an Alaska Native village? ☐ Yes ☐ No

118. Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces? ☐ Yes ☐ No

119. Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the Reserves or National Guard? ☐ Yes ☐ No

120. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GED | <input type="checkbox"/> College Graduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some College | |

121. Have you completed the VPSO Academy? ☐ Yes ☐ No

122. When did you complete the VPSO Academy? _____ / _____
Month Year

The next questions are about your pay and housing conditions. Please check the box next to the appropriate response for each question.

123. Does more than one-third of your pay as a VPSO go toward housing costs?? ☐ Yes ☐ No

124. Which one of the following statements best describes your current living arrangements?

☐ I live in housing that I rent.

☐ I live in housing that I own

☐ I live in housing that is provided for free by the village.

☐ I live in housing that is owned or rented by my parents or other relative.

125. In your time as a VPSO, have you used food stamps to deal with times of financial difficulty? ☐ Yes ☐ No

126. In your time as a VPSO, have you worked other jobs in order to "make ends meet"? ☐ Yes ☐ No

127. In your time as a VPSO, have you received welfare payments to get through difficult financial times? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Use your own words to answer the final two questions in the space provided.

128. What is the one worst thing about being a VPSO? Why is it so horrible?

129. What is the one best thing about being a VPSO? Why is it so great?

Now that you have completed this survey, place it in the postage paid envelope and mail it to Dr. Wood at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Make sure to also return your signed consent form.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate it. Your responses will help us to better understand the problem of turnover by VPSOs.

Survey of Turnover Among Alaska Village Public Safety Officers
[Former Officers]

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING THE SURVEY.

1. Answer each question as honestly as possible.
2. Do not write your name anywhere on this survey.
3. The questions ask about your experiences and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers. Please complete the questionnaire by yourself, without consulting others.
4. There are three types of questions.

Closed questions are followed by answers for you to choose from. Check the box next to the answer you choose. Choose only one answer unless the instructions say otherwise. For example:

1. How many people live in your village?	
<input type="checkbox"/> less than 50	<input type="checkbox"/> between 201 and 300
<input type="checkbox"/> between 51 and 100	<input type="checkbox"/> between 301 and 400
<input type="checkbox"/> between 101 and 200	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 400
If there are 175 people living in your village, you would check or fill in the box before the answer "between 101 and 200"	

Opinion questions are statements that have fixed answers for you to choose from. Circle the answer that most closely matches your opinion about the statement and the strength of that opinion. In other words, circle whether you "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", or "strongly disagree" with the statement or whether you "don't know" what your opinion is. Circle only one answer. For example:

1. VPSO uniforms were uncomfortable.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If you felt that the VPSO uniforms were very uncomfortable, you would circle the "Strongly Agree" answer. On the other hand, if you thought VPSO uniforms were comfortable, you would circle that you "Disagree" with the statement.					

Open questions are followed by blank spaces for you to provide specific information or to write your answer in your own words. For example:

1. How many arrests did you make as a VPSO? _____
If you have made 23 arrests as a VPSO, you would enter that number in the space provided.

5. If you feel that a question does not apply to you, do not answer it. For example, you will find that some questions are designed specially for Alaska Native VPSOs. If you are not an Alaska Native, do not answer those questions.
6. After you have completed the survey place it in the postage paid envelope and mail it to Dr. Wood at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

TURN THE PAGE TO BEGIN THE SURVEY.

We are interested in your motivations for becoming a VPSO and your opinion on VPSO training. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

1. I became a VPSO because I saw it as a good job to start a career in law enforcement.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. I became a VPSO because the village I lived in needed someone to take the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. I became a VPSO because I was unemployed and I needed a job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. I became a VPSO because I saw it as a way to make money to support subsistence activities.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I became a VPSO because I wanted to move to, and live in, rural Alaska.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I became a VPSO because I thought it would be an interesting or exciting way to make a living.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. When I was a VPSO I felt that I was well trained for the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. There were many things that VPSO training did not prepare me for.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. The VPSO training academy prepared me for what I had to do on the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. I was not satisfied with the training I received as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We are interested in your opinion about VPSO salaries and promotional opportunities. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

11. I was not paid very well as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. As a VPSO, I earned more than other people in the village who had full time jobs.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. I was able to support myself and my family on my VPSO salary.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. VPSOs make much less than the job is worth.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. I was satisfied with the opportunities for promotion as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16. The VPSO job is a "dead end" job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The next questions deal with your experiences as a day-to-day VPSO. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

17. I was always clear about what I had to do as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. I was always clear about the limits of my authority as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19. I was always clear about what people expected of me as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20. Sometimes people around me had different opinions about what I should be doing as a VPSO and how I should be doing it.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. Many times the local government officials would tell me to do one thing while my oversight trooper would tell me to do something else.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. Many times the local government officials would tell me to do one thing while the VPSO coordinator would tell me to do something else.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23. Many times the VPSO coordinator would tell me to do one thing while my oversight trooper would tell me to do something else.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24. My oversight trooper would call me on the telephone quite often just to check on how things were going for me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. My oversight trooper would visit my village only in case of emergency or an investigation.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26. People treated me like I was somehow less of a Native Alaskan when I became a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27. People treated me like an outcast in the community when I became a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28. I often had trouble sleeping when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29. My health was adversely affected by my job as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30. I often felt tense and had difficulties relaxing when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31. I often suffered headaches when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32. I was lucky that I was not injured in some of the dangerous situations I responded to when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33. I was put into situations so dangerous that I feared for my life and safety when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We would also like to know about your experiences in the village when you were a VPSO. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

34. While working as a VPSO, it was difficult for me to go hunting or fishing because I had to be on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35. While working as a VPSO, I could not afford the expense of hunting or fishing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
36. While working as a VPSO, I was unable to go hunting or fishing for more than one week at a time because I had to be on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. While working as a VPSO, I was unable to take part in community activities because I had to be on call or on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
38. While working as a VPSO, I was unable to take a vacation because I had to be on duty.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39. When I was a VPSO, the community expected me to do my job 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40. While working as a VPSO, I found it difficult to get the time to spend alone with my family.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
41. I was not pressured by my relatives to be lenient toward them when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
42. It was difficult enforcing the law against people that I am related to.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
43. I did not have the equipment I needed to do my job as a VPSO properly.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44. While working as a VPSO, I received little assistance in obtaining the equipment I needed to do my job properly.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45. The office space provided me was adequate for the job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
46. The community supported me when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47. When I was a VPSO, people let me know that they appreciated the job I was doing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48. When I was a VPSO, people told me that they wanted me to continue to be a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

These next questions deal with officer safety and availability of backup. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

49. Were you ever injured while making an arrest? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 52)

50. If yes, how many times were you injured while making an arrest? _____

51. Did any of your injuries require medical attention? ☐ Yes ☐ No

52. Did you ever respond to a situation where a perpetrator was using, or threatening to use, a firearm? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 55)

53. If yes, how many times did you have to deal with a perpetrator using or threatening to use firearm? _____

54. Were shots fired by any of these perpetrators? ☐ Yes ☐ No

55. Did you ever respond to a situation dealing with a perpetrator who was using, or threatening to use, a weapon other than a firearm? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(if no, go to question 58)

56. If yes, how many times did you have to deal with a perpetrator who was using, or threatening to use, a weapon other than a firearm? _____

57. Did the any of these perpetrators actually use the weapon to injure either you or someone else involved in the situation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

58. When you were a VPSO, were there also other also other police officers such as VPOs or tribal police in that village? ☐ Yes ☐ No

59. How often would you talk to your oversight trooper on the telephone?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every three months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a month | |

60. How often would you see your oversight trooper in person?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every two weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every three months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a month | |

61. The nearest state trooper posting was how far away from the village that you were a VPSO in?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 25 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 150 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 50 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> 151 to 200 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 51 to 75 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 200 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 76 to 100 miles | |

62. In good weather, how long would it take the state troopers to travel to the village where you were a VPSO?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 30 minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> Between 2 hours and 4 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between 30 minutes and 1 hour | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between 1 hour and 2 hours | |

We would like to know something about your employment after you stopped being a VPSO. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

63. How did the salary and benefits you received as a VPSO compare to those from the job you took after leaving VPSO service?

- ☐ The salary and benefits were better than I received as a VPSO.
- ☐ The salary and benefits were about the same as I received as a VPSO.
- ☐ The salary and benefits were worse than I received as a VPSO.

64. How long did it take you to find another job after you left your VPSO position?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No time at all because I already had another job lined up | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 months but less than 6 months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a week | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 6 months but less than a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than a week but less than a month | <input type="checkbox"/> More than a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than a month but less than 3 months | <input type="checkbox"/> I still have not found a job after leaving VPSO service |

65. What kind of job did you take after leaving VPSO service? _____

The next questions are about having to deal with relatives while a VPSO. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

66. Were any of the villages you were a VPSO in also a village where you grew up? ☐ Yes ☐ No (if no, go to question 72)

67. Were you related to people in the village that you were a VPSO? ☐ Yes ☐ No (if no, go to question 70)

68. Did you ever have to arrest or take into custody someone who is related to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No (if no, go to question 70)

69. Of the relatives that you arrested, who was the most closely related to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> One of your parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Your niece or nephew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your brother or sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Your first cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your son or daughter | <input type="checkbox"/> Your second cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your aunt or uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone else you consider to be a relative |

70. Did you ever transfer from your home village to be a VPSO in another village? ☐ Yes ☐ No (if no, go to question 72)

71. Compared to your home village, how was the job of VPSO in the village you transferred to?

- ☐ It was easier being a VPSO in the village I was transferred to.
- ☐ There was little to no difference between being a VPSO in my home village or in the village I transferred to.
- ☐ It was more difficult being a VPSO in the village I transferred to.

This next question asks for your opinion about problems facing VPSOs.

72. Below is a list common complaints or sources of dissatisfaction about being a VPSO. We would like you to rank these complaints in order from what you think is the biggest source of dissatisfaction to what you think is the smallest source of dissatisfaction. Put a '1' next to what you believe is the biggest source of dissatisfaction. Then put a '2' next to what you think is the second biggest source of dissatisfaction; and so on. Put a '10' next to what you believe is the smallest complaint. No ties, please.

- | | |
|--|--|
| _____ Low pay and benefits. | _____ Facing dangerous situations unarmed. |
| _____ Poor training. | _____ Lacking backup in dangerous situations. |
| _____ Little chance of promotion. | _____ Inability to hunt or fish when necessary. |
| _____ Too many "bosses" to satisfy. | _____ Little support in the village for the VPSO. |
| _____ Uncertainty about powers and duties. | _____ Being 'on call' 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. |

The following questions are designed to give us an understanding of your administrative style. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

73. I have no particular desire to be the leader of a group.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
74. I am usually the one who initiates activities in my group.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
75. I shy away from situations where I might be asked to take charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
76. I work best in a group when I'm the person in charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77. I would avoid a job that required me to supervise other people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
78. I seek positions where I can influence others.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79. I let others take the lead when I am on a committee.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
80. In an emergency, I get people organized and take charge.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The next questions deal with the reasons why you are no longer a VPSO. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

81. Why are you no longer a VPSO?

- ☐ Because I resigned. (go to question 82)
- ☐ Because I was fired. (go to question 83)

82. Why did you resign? Of the reasons listed below, check the one which most closely matches your reason for resignation. (After answering this question, skip to question 84)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To accept a higher paying job in the criminal justice system. | <input type="checkbox"/> To go back to school to continue education. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To accept a higher paying job outside the criminal justice system. | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not want to transfer to another village. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For health reasons. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pressures of job became too much. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To move to another village or town. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pressures from village government officials. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For family reasons. | <input type="checkbox"/> For other reasons (explain here). |

83. Why were you fired? Of the reasons listed below, check to one which most closely matches the reason why you were dismissed.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For failure to perform duty. | <input type="checkbox"/> For problems with alcohol. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For failure to attend the academy. | <input type="checkbox"/> For an arrest for criminal activity. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of academic problems at the academy. | <input type="checkbox"/> For other reasons (explain here). |

84. Did you ever resign your VPSO position and then, once again, become a VPSO?

☐ Yes

☐ No
(if no, go to question 86)

85. In your own words, explain why you decided to re-join the VPSO program.

This next group of questions requests demographic information that will help us to compare your responses to others' responses. Please check or write in the appropriate response for each question.

86. Of the following, which one category best describes your race or ethnicity?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aleut | <input type="checkbox"/> Haida | <input type="checkbox"/> Tsimshian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athabascan | <input type="checkbox"/> Iñupiaq | <input type="checkbox"/> Yupik |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

87. What is your sex?

☐ Male

☐ Female

88. What is your current annual income?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 to \$5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,001 to \$30,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,001 to \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,001 to \$35,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,001 to \$15,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,001 to \$40,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,001 to \$20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001 to \$45,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,001 to \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$45,001 or more |

89. What is your marital status?

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced, remarried | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married (and never divorced) | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/Separated, not remarried | |

90. Were you raised in an Alaska Native family?

☐ Yes

☐ No

91. Were you raised in an Alaska Native village?

☐ Yes

☐ No

92. Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?

☐ Yes

☐ No

93. Did you serve in the Reserves or National Guard before or during the time that you were a VPSO?

☐ Yes

☐ No

94. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GED | <input type="checkbox"/> College Graduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some College | |

95. Did you complete the VPSO Academy in Sitka?

☐ Yes

☐ No

96. When did you complete the VPSO Academy? _____ / _____
Month Year

The next questions are about your pay and housing conditions. Please check the box next to the appropriate response for each question.

97. Did more than one-third of your pay as a VPSO go toward housing costs??	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
98. Which one of the following statements best describes your living arrangements when you were a VPSO?		
<input type="checkbox"/> I lived in housing that I rented.	<input type="checkbox"/> I lived in housing that I owned.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I lived in housing that was provided for free by the village.	<input type="checkbox"/> I lived in housing that was owned or rented by my parents or other relative.	
99. In your time as a VPSO, did you use food stamps to deal with times of financial difficulty?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
100. In your time as a VPSO, did you worked other jobs in order to “make ends meet”?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
101. In your time as a VPSO, did you received welfare payments to get through difficult financial times?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

The following eight questions ask for your opinion about the housing and retirement benefits available to VPSOs. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle only one answer in each line across)

102. My housing costs were very expensive when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
103. Given what it takes to be a VPSO, the retirement benefits available to VPSOs are very poor.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
104. Compared to other houses in the village(s) that I was a VPSO in, the house(s) I lived in was in poor condition. (Housing	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
105. I would have continued to be a VPSO if better retirement benefits were offered.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
106. I was satisfied with the retirement benefits available to me as a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
107. Compared to others in the village(s) that I was a VPSO in, I paid a great deal for my housing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
108. I was satisfied with the quality of the housing I lived in when I was a VPSO.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
109. VPSOs deserve retirement benefits that are better than they actually receive.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The final group of questions requires you to answer in your own words using the space provided.

110. What was the one worst thing about being a VPSO? Why was it so horrible?

111. What was the one best thing about being a VPSO? Why was it so great?

112. In your own words, explain why you are no longer a VPSO.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate it. Your responses will help us to better understand the problem of turnover by VPSOs.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

APPENDIX 3: REGIONAL NON-PROFIT CORPORATION OFFICER INFORMATION FORM

Study of Turnover Among Alaska Village Public Safety Officers

OFFICER INFORMATION FORM

Please record the following information for the named formerly serving VPSO. On this page you will need to fill out information on the individual's sex, date of birth, place of birth, last known address and telephone number, and information on VPSO Academy attendance.

Name:	Last Name Last	First Name First	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Date of Birth:	____/____/____ Month Day Year	Place of Birth:	_____ City State

Last Known Address:	_____ Street Address		
	_____ City	_____ State	_____ ZIP Code
	_____ Telephone Number		

last village where served as VPSO:	VILLAGE name of village	<u>date hired</u> 02/30/83 month day year	<u>date terminated</u> 04/31/88 month day year
Reason for Termination:	Quit to join AST		

2nd to last village where served as VPSO:	name of village	<u>date hired</u> month day year	<u>date terminated</u> month day year
Reason for Termination:			

3rd to last village where served as VPSO:	name of village	<u>date hired</u> month day year	<u>date terminated</u> month day year
Reason for Termination:			

Did officer complete VPSO Academy?	<u>VPSO Academy</u> <u>date of academy attendance</u> ____/____ month year
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

To provide the information requested on this page, you will need to refer to the Alaska Police Standards Council "F-3" Personal History Statement form that was filled out when the VPSO applied for the job.

Last Name, First Name

Military Service (Question #11 of F-3 form)

Did officer serve in the U.S.
Armed Forces?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Was officer a member of the
Reserves or National Guard?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Education (Question #12 of F-3 form)

High School

Attended

College

Graduate?

College?

Graduate?

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No

Languages Known (Question #13 of F-3 form)

Reads, speaks, understands, or
writes Alaska Native language....

☐ Yes

☐ No

Reads, speaks, understands, or
writes other non-English language.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Residence/Home Village Information (Question #21 of F-3 form)

City or
village
of residence
when hired:

(From 1st line of Question #21 of F-3 form)

Did officer ever reside in a community
they later were a VPSO?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Employment Information (Question #17 of F-3 Form)

1st Most

"From Date"

"To Date"

Recent

Job:

____/____/____ month day year

Job Title: _____

City/Village: _____

2nd

"From Date"

"To Date"

Most

Recent

Job:

____/____/____ month day year

Job Title: _____

City/Village: _____

3rd

"From Date"

"To Date"

Most

Recent

Job:

____/____/____ month day year

Job Title: _____

City/Village: _____

4th

"From Date"

"To Date"

Most

Recent

Job:

____/____/____ month day year

Job Title: _____

City/Village: _____

5th

"From Date"

"To Date"

Most

Recent

Job:

____/____/____ month day year

Job Title: _____

City/Village: _____