

A Year of Challenge



2009
Annual Report

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I am pleased to present the 2009 annual report for the Gaston County Police.

I would like to thank the men and women of this department for their continued efforts in making Gaston County a better place to call home. Employees throughout every Division of the Department have demonstrated the highest levels of dedication, performance and professionalism.

Our Communications Division is responsible for dispatching a variety of emergency services in the County. In 2009, they performed a record number (415,406) of dispatch activities. Keeping the Division fully staffed is critical. Disappointingly, the procurement, training and retention of qualified individuals has been a challenge. In 2009 nearly 25% of all training (almost 3,900 hours) was devoted to the basic training of new hires.

Our Animal Control Division investigated more calls and placed more animals than ever before. Without needed facility improvements or additional personnel, our staff responded to the growing demand for service with hard work and dedication. Additionally, community partners (such as volunteers and animal welfare organizations) have helped us meet the County's needs.

Our police officers have worked proactively within our community to solve crime. We continue to develop our ability to analyze crimes and crime trends. We have created an innovative and comprehensive system of information sharing and data mining. Offender Based Investigations (OBI) helps officers identify potential suspects, including repeat offenders who are responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime.

We could look back on 2009 and take pride in an overall reduction of crime. We could look back and take pride in the courageous actions our officers displayed when faced with immediate and imminent threats. We could look back and be proud of the many partnerships we have created and sustained for greater success. Indeed, there are many endeavors we could reflect upon that have improved our community. There have been many accomplishments, large and small that we could look back upon with great pride. But we must look forward.

We must look forward to identify and capably meet the challenges that lie ahead of us in this new decade.

As always, thank you for your continued interest and support.



William J. Farley
Chief of Police

THE DEPARTMENT

HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Gaston County Police Department began operation in 1957 with a chief, a secretary and 23 sworn officers. Since its inception, the Department has



continually grown stronger and more proficient. By 1991, the Commission on Accreditation of Law

Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) awarded accreditation status to the Department, making it the 190th internationally accredited police agency.

Today, the Department employs 138 sworn officers who patrol a community of approximately 85,000 residents and spans an area of over 270 square miles. In addition, the Department employs 94 civilians who provide essential services such as communications, information processing, planning, crime analysis and animal control. Every member of the Department is committed to promoting the Department's standards and goals, which are best expressed through our mission and value statements.

MISSION

To enhance safety and security through police services, which reflect our compassion and concern for the quality of life of its citizens.



Patrol car in 1957.



Current patrol car.



Dodge Chargers were purchased and put into service in 2009.

VALUES

Fairness

We protect constitutional rights through impartial enforcement of the law. We are dedicated to treating citizens and our employees with dignity, respect and equality.

Integrity

We adhere to the highest moral and ethical standards. Honesty and sincerity serve as the foundation in dealing with each other and the community. In all we do, we have the courage and commitment to uphold these values.

Respect

We will treat all people with compassion, tolerance and dignity by providing professional law enforcement services through highly trained personnel accountable to our community.

Service

We strive to improve the quality of life in partnership with the community. Our commitment is unwavering in the face of the many challenges confronting our officers.

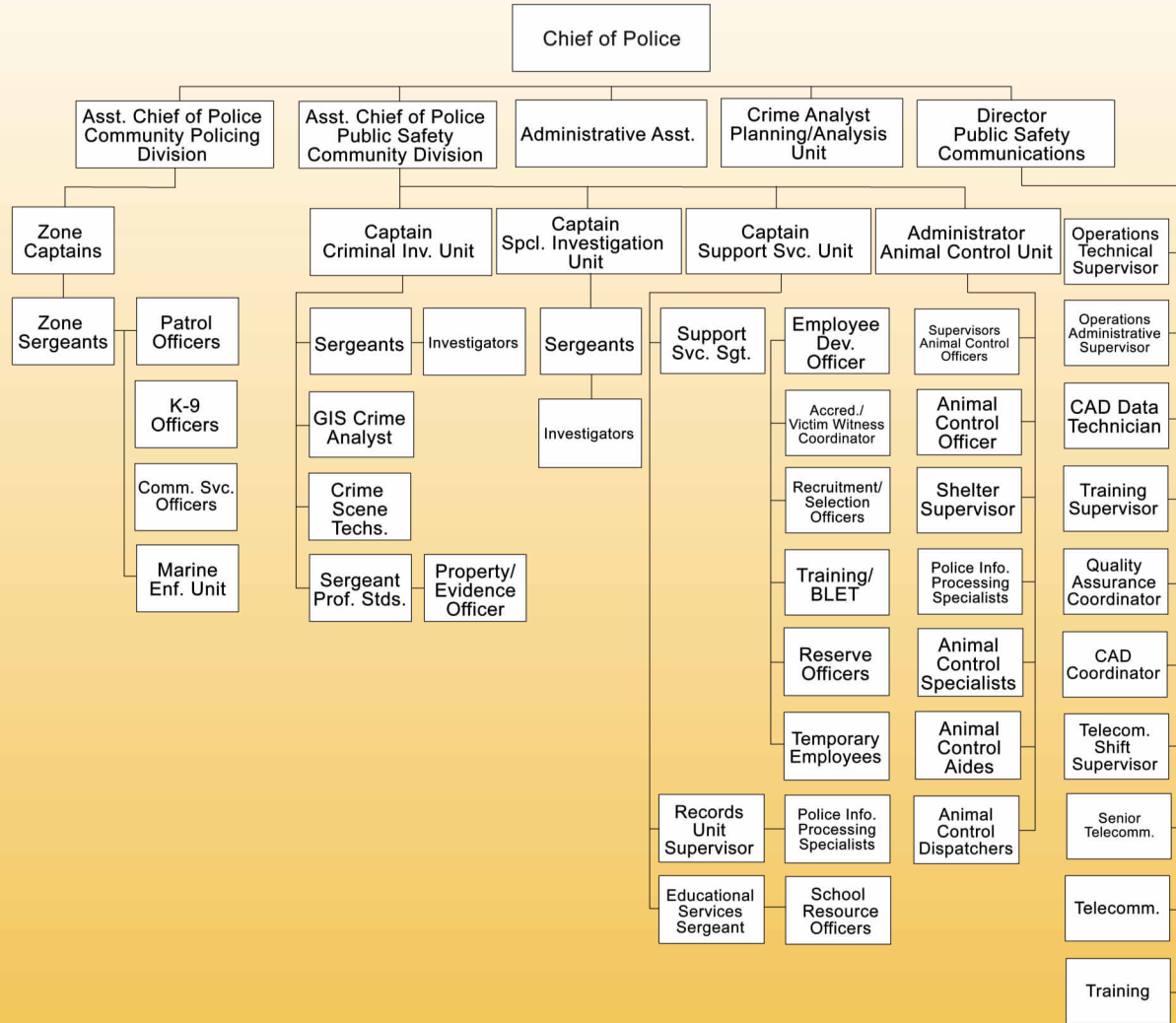
Trust

We demand honesty and accountability from every employee. This value fosters community and employee confidence in the Department and allows for an open and honest relationship.

Budget 5-Year History



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



DEPARTMENT DIVISIONS

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

The Chief manages each division, which is commanded by an Assistant Chief or Director. Within each of the operating divisions are various units that carry out the Department's operational and administrative functions. The Chief also directly manages all budgetary functions of the Department as well as the Professional Standards Unit and Planning and Analysis Unit.

COMMUNITY POLICING

The Community Policing Division is overseen by an Assistant Chief and is comprised primarily of uniformed officers assigned to one of four geographical areas known as zones. Each zone is commanded by a Captain. The officers assigned to each zone are further divided into squads that cover rotating 12-hour shifts and are supervised by a Sergeant. The Community Policing Division is responsible for controlling and preventing crime through regular patrols, answering calls for service, apprehending offenders, enforcing criminal and traffic laws, conducting preliminary investigations and working with the community to solve neighborhood crime problems. This Division also has two specialized patrol units, which are the K-9 Unit and a seasonal Marine Enforcement Unit.

INVESTIGATIONS & SUPPORT SERVICES

The Investigations and Support Services Divisions are overseen by an Assistant Chief and are comprised of the Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU), the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) and the Support Services Unit. The Division also consists of two specialty units, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) and the Hazardous Device Unit (HDU), whose specially trained members are available 24 hours a day to assist in crisis situations. The Criminal Investigations Unit is responsible for the investigation of major felony offenses, select misdemeanors, missing persons, unattended deaths, offenses involving juveniles and the processing of evidence. Property and Evidence is also included in this unit. The Special Investigations Unit is primarily responsible for narcotics investigations, but is also charged with investigating gambling and prostitution offenses. The Support Services Unit includes Educational Services, which provides School Resource Officers to County schools; Employee Development, which is responsible for employee training; Recruitment and Selection, which handles all aspects of the hiring process; Accreditation, which is responsible for maintaining all necessary information to maintain compliance with accreditation standards and Police Information Processing, which is primarily responsible for maintaining the Department's records and providing 24-hour access for both public and officer inquiries.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Division is led by a Director and, comprised of 53 employees covering 4 shifts, who provide 24-hour coverage of emergency 911 calls and radio transmissions. The Unit is charged with maintaining and operating the computer-aided dispatch system for police, fire and medical calls, as well as receiving both emergency and non-emergency calls for service.

ANIMAL CONTROL

The Animal Control Division is led by an Administrator and is comprised of 22 employees including 3 supervisors. Animal Control is charged with the duty and responsibility of enforcing animal related State statutes and County ordinances. Field operations are comprised of both sworn and non-sworn personnel, while administrative personnel provide general clerical, accounting and informational services. The mission of the Animal Control Division is not only to enhance the safety of county citizens, but also to ensure the proper care and treatment of animals.

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

General Inquiries

Professional Standards (Internal Affairs)

Planning & Analysis Unit

(704) 866-3320

(704) 866-3384

(704) 866-3392

COMMUNITY POLICING DIVISION

Emergency

Non-Emergency

911

(704) 866-3320

INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION

Criminal Investigations Unit

Crime Scene Search Unit

Crime Analysis Unit

Property & Evidence Unit

(704) 866-3320

(704) 866-3305

(704) 866-3320

Special Investigations Unit

Emergency Response Team

Hazardous Devices Unit

(704) 866-3320

(704) 866-3320

SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

Educational Services Unit

Employee Development Unit

Recruitment & Selection Unit

(704) 866-3320

(704) 866-3320

(704) 866-3320

Victim & Witness Coordinator

Accreditation

Records

(704) 866-3378

(704) 866-3378

(704) 866-3320

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

Emergency

Non-Emergency

911

(704) 866-3300

ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION

Emergency

Non-Emergency

911

(704) 922-8677

AWARD RECOGNITION

GASTON COUNTY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARDS TO GASTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFF

Lisa Benton
Angela Scott

Animal Control Division
Police Administration

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH RECIPIENTS FOR 2009

January	Sworn - Grant Kendall Non-Sworn - Angela Scott
February	Sworn - Jeff Phelps
May	Sworn - Rob Henninger Non-Sworn - Communications "D" Shift
June	Sworn - Brian Rogers
July	Sworn - Kathryn Williamson, Graham Kuzia & Jim Shaw Non-Sworn - Cheryl Moore, Joann Yarbrow, Nicole Costner & Jennifer Reynolds
August	Sworn - Jennifer Hamrick
September	Sworn - Tim King Non-Sworn - Gail Page
October	Sworn - Michael Lynch Non-Sworn - Joann Yarbrow
November	Sworn - Jake Michael Non-Sworn - Cindy Rollins
December	Sworn - Graham Kuzia Non-Sworn - Gloria Campbell

CRIME STATISTICS

UCR INDEX CRIMES

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) began the Uniform Reporting (UCR) Program in 1930 to compile data on eight “index crimes:” murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny and arson.

Since then, new reporting guidelines, called the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), was developed. The revisions in the new system were aimed at “enhancing the quantity, quality and timeliness of crime data collection and improving the methodology used to compile, analyze, audit and publish the collected crime statistics.” Under NIBRS crimes are divided into two groups with “Group A” offenses including the UCR index crimes as well as numerous other offenses. In total, the NIBRS Group A crimes were expanded to encompass 22 criminal categories consisting of 46 separate offenses and Group B crimes are made up of an additional 11 public order type offenses. Other changes under NIBRS include the restructuring in definitions of certain crimes, such as forcible sex and aggravated assault.

Concerns have arisen regarding NIBRS’ effects on crime statistics. Because of the new criteria, many jurisdictions with historically lower crime levels have experienced some exaggerated changes in their crime rates.

The Gaston County Police Department transitioned into NIBRS in 2006. Law enforcement

agencies across the country are also making the transition to NIBRS, but the FBI continues to publish the national crimes statistics based on the UCR Program.

2009 NATIONAL & REGIONAL UCR

VIOLENT CRIME

According to the FBI’s 2009 Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report, violent crime across the US decreased by 4% in 2009, with a 10% decrease in murder, a 3% decrease in forcible rape, a 7% decrease in robbery and a 3% decrease in aggravated assault. In the South Region, violent crime decreased by 6%: -8% murder, -1% forcible rape, -9% robbery and -5% aggravated assault.

PROPERTY CRIME

Property crime in the US decreased 6% in 2009, with a 3% decrease in burglary, a 5% decrease in larceny, an 19% decrease in motor vehicle theft and an 8% decrease in arson. In the South, property crime decreased by 4%, with a 4%

decrease in larceny, an 18% decrease in motor vehicle theft and an 8% decrease in arson.

LOCAL CRIME STATS

TOTAL INDEX CRIMES

Local index crimes occurring within the Department’s service area in 2009 was 1,821, down 13% from 2008.

VIOLENT CRIME VS. PROPERTY CRIME

Local violent crime decreased 11% in 2009. Homicides were down 43%, while robberies decreased 12%.

Property crime also decreased locally by 13% in 2009. Burglary was down 17%, larceny decreased 16% and motor vehicle theft decreased by 17%.



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY

PURPOSE

The Gaston County Police Department conducts the Community Feedback Survey

throughout the year with approximately 1,000 people who live within the Department's service area and have called for service during the year. This

“Overall, survey participants felt safer in their neighborhood and Gaston County in 2009 than last year.”

survey serves as a tool to measure the Department's overall effectiveness in meeting the needs and addressing the concerns of those it serves.

2009 ANALYSIS & COMPARISON TO 2008

Safety

Of the citizens surveyed, more than half have been a victim of crime in Gaston County before, up fifteen percent (15%). Approximately 94% of all survey participants had contact with the Department at least once in the last 12 months.

Survey participants generally felt safer in their neighborhoods compared to Gaston County as a whole, with eighty-six percent (86%) feeling safe to very safe in their neighborhoods and eighty-three percent (83%) feeling safe to very safe in Gaston County.

Overall, survey participants felt safer in their neighborhood and Gaston County in 2009 than last year.

Crime Rate

Approximately sixty-eight percent (68%) of participants described the crime rate as being stable within their neighborhoods, increasing by seven percent (7%) over 2008. In contrast, sixty-two percent (62%) of participants felt the crime rate in Gaston County is increasing, down eight percent (8%) from last year.

Quality of Service

Participants were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the quality of service they received from the Department on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of satisfaction. Approximately forty-two percent (42%) rated their satisfaction with the services a “10” and seventy-nine percent (79%) rated the services an “8” or higher.

Concerns

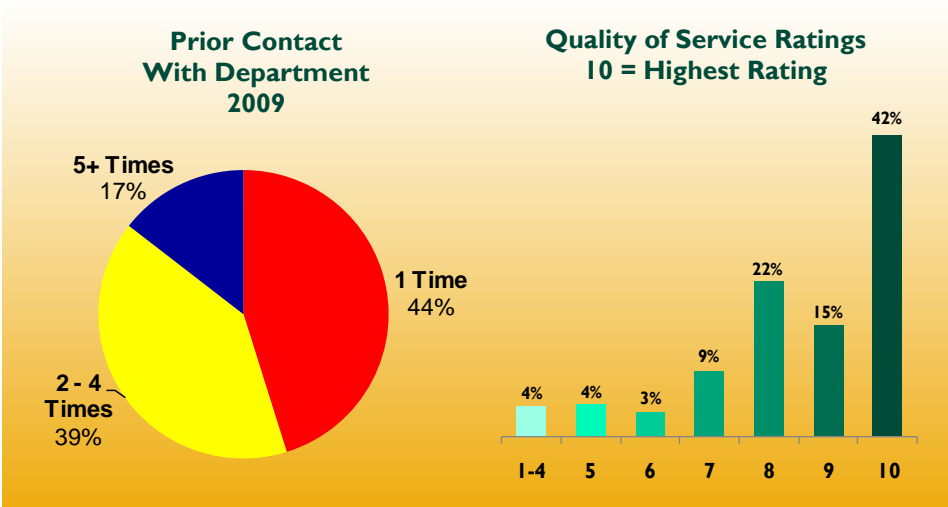
The top three concerns of survey participants were: 1) more patrol visibility at twenty-one percent (21%); 2) more manpower at sixteen percent (16%); and, 3) better response times at twelve

percent (12%). When comparing concerns to those in 2008, participants appeared less concerned about increasing patrol visibility and improving response times, but more concerned about the need for more manpower, representing a twenty-two percent (22%) increase over 2008.

Call & Case Management

Participants were pleased with the overall handling of their telephone call and case. They felt their telephone call was answered quickly (99%) and handled appropriately (98%). Approximately eighty-six percent (86%) of participants were contacted by an officer in person and sixty percent (60%) rated the officer as “Excellent” in the areas of courtesy, speech clarity, thoroughness, helpfulness, attitude and professionalism. Only five percent (5%) of respondents rated officers “Fair” or “Poor.”

Compared to 2008, five percent (5%) more participants rated the responding officer as “Excellent.”



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The employees of the Gaston County Police Department provide direct public safety services to many individuals every day. However, some citizens have questions, concerns or complaints about the Department or the conduct of individual employees. The Professional Standards Unit conducts or reviews objective investigations of complaints made against any Police, Animal Control or Telecommunications employee.

As each complaint is investigated, a determination is made as to whether there is sufficient evidence to sustain the allegation and take disciplinary action. If there is insufficient evidence to sustain the allegation, the disposition of the complaint is then categorized based on the level of mitigating evidence. The following is a list of possible dispositions of employee complaints:

- Sustained**
 The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the allegation clearly.

- Not Sustained**
 The investigation failed to discover sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation made against the employee.
- Unfounded**
 The investigation indicated that the alleged act or omission reported did not occur or did not involve Department personnel.
- Exonerated**
 The investigation indicates that the act or omission reported did occur but was justified, lawful and/or proper.

The Department strives for continuous improvement in the level of service it provides to citizens. The Professional Standards Unit meticulously investigates complaints and views each one as an opportunity to

improve the Department's service and communicate more effectively. Moreover, information gathered through the complaint process assists the Department in improving service.

Stats

The Professional Standards Unit received or investigated a total of 90 complaints in 2009 involving the following:

- 41 non-sworn employees
- 70 sworn employees

Civilian Employees

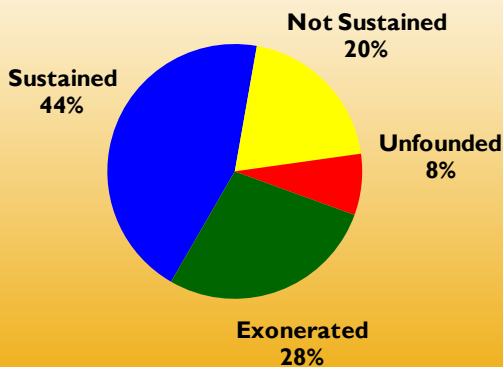
Sustained	24
Not Sustained	5
Unfounded	0
<u>Exonerated</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	33

Sworn Employees

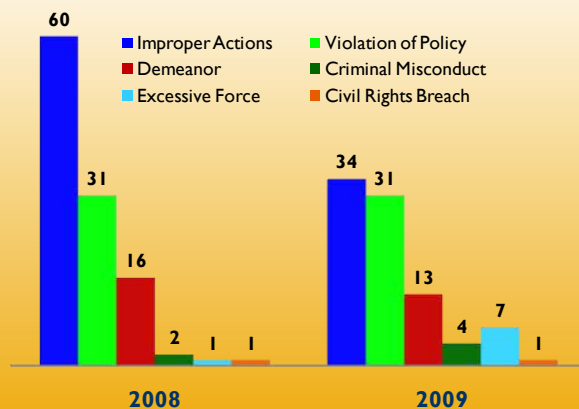
Sustained	16
Not Sustained	13
Unfounded	7
<u>Exonerated</u>	<u>21</u>
Total	57

The Community Policing Division

Disposition of Complaints



Complaints by Type

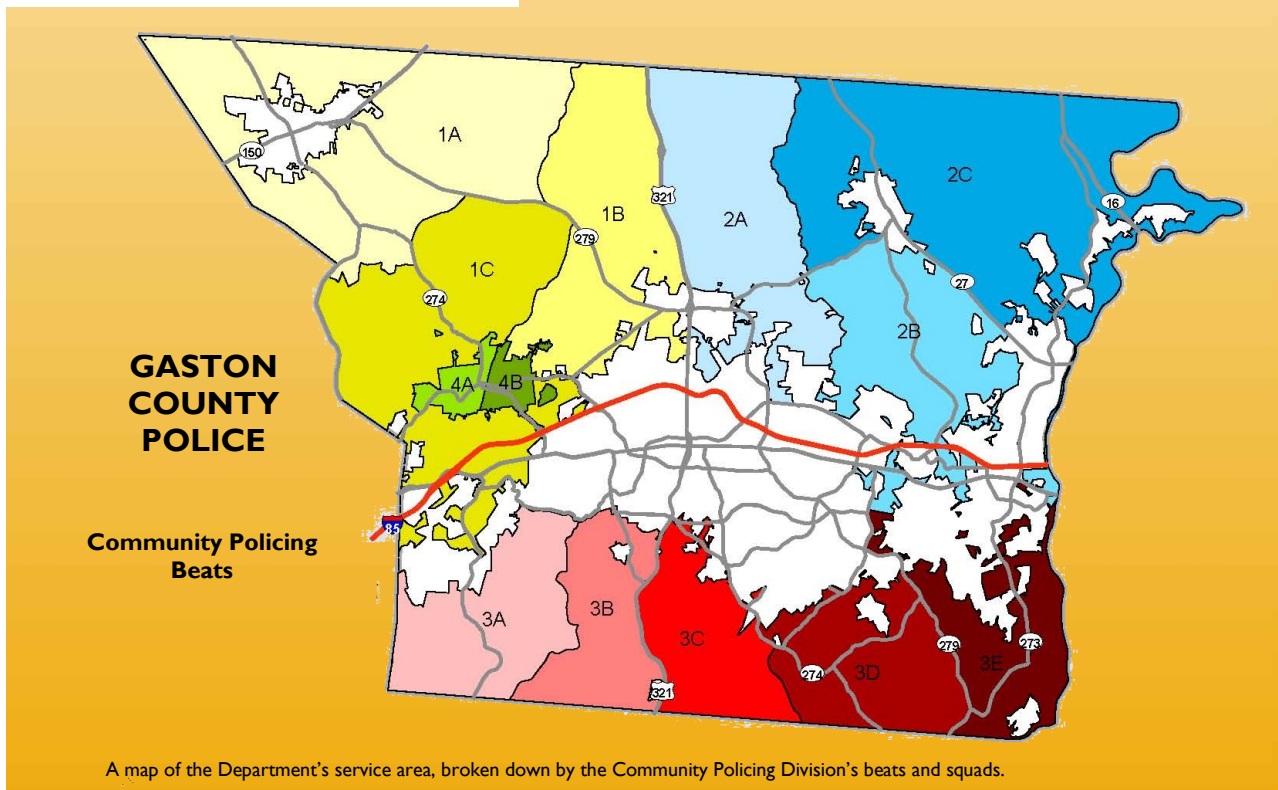


COMMUNITY POLICING DIVISION

Community Policing Stats

is overseen by an Assistant Chief and is comprised primarily of uniformed officers assigned to one of four geographical areas known as zones, which are in turn commanded by a Captain. A detailed description of the zone locations is provided on the right. The officers assigned to each zone are further divided into squads that cover rotating 12-hour shifts and are supervised by a Sergeant. This Division is responsible for controlling and preventing crime through regular patrols, answering calls for service, apprehending offenders, enforcing criminal and traffic laws, conducting preliminary investigations and working with the community to solve neighborhood crime problems. This Division also has two specialized patrol units, the K-9 Unit and the Marine Enforcement Unit.

	<u>Zone 1</u>	<u>Zone 2</u>	<u>Zone 3</u>	<u>Zone 4</u>
Traffic Citations	1,402	2,069	2,237	449
Traffic Accidents	19	14	3	97
Warning Citations	1,012	802	942	451
Warrants/Summons Served	1,019	1,462	1,073	328
All Case Offenses				
Aggravated Assault	40	67	57	19
Alcohol Violations	4	11	8	1
Arson	4	14	14	3
Burglary	108	184	156	40
Drug Violations	141	244	244	117
DWI	13	16	10	14
Fraud	28	36	42	32
Homicide	0	2	2	0
Larceny	147	191	174	62
Larceny from MV	70	89	77	26
Missing Persons	15	29	27	7
Motor Vehicle Theft	64	58	51	13
Public Order	6	15	13	17
Robbery	5	1	11	5
Sex Offenses, Forcible	16	12	20	2
Sex Offenses, Nonforcible	3	3	3	0
Simple Assault	85	122	131	36
Stolen Property	8	6	9	3
Trespassing	10	26	17	4
Vandalism	52	103	72	30
Weapons Violations	8	17	7	9
All Other Crimes	245	469	452	164
Not a Crime	81	113	85	51
All Case Offenses	1,140	1,806	1,671	653



ZONE I

In 2009, officers in Zone I focused on reducing property crime, the number of repeated calls for service and illegal narcotic sales. The Crime Analysis Unit assisted officers in identifying crime trends and the locations where these types of activities were occurring most frequently. Officers used the information gained to implement problem solving strategies to address the issues in those areas. Officers in Zone I also increased directed patrol efforts in these locations and partnered with citizens and county entities to improve the safety and quality of life in these communities.

Directed Enforcement

An additional focus was placed on locations and the identification of individuals suspected of criminal activity. Constant monitoring of these locations and proactive enforcement by every officer in Zone I and specialized units resulted in multiple arrests and an immediate reduction in criminal activities and fear of such crimes.

For example, one initiative involved repeated complaints of drug activity around the ZA Hunter Road area in Cherryville. Officers targeted this specific location, and were able to identify two drug suppliers. Through proactive patrol efforts, and with assistance from the Special Investigations and K-9 Units, officers successfully arrested several individuals for these crimes.

Larcenies of utility trailers and lawn equipment, as well as motor vehicle thefts within the zone, were also a primary focus of directed enforcement efforts. Each squad worked on this initiative, and, through proactive

policing efforts, a group of individuals from Gaston and neighboring counties were identified as the perpetrators committing these crimes. Inter-agency cooperation with the neighboring counties, as well as the Cherryville Police Department, led to several arrests involving these subjects. This initiative was an overall success and reported larcenies and motor vehicle thefts decreased significantly.

Traffic Initiatives

The officers in Zone I were involved in several traffic initiatives during 2009. They participated in several of the Governor's Highway Safety Programs such as "Booze It or Lose It," "R U Buckled," and "No Need to Speed." They also participated in two major DWI checkpoints, one of which was hosted by the Department. These efforts netted several DWI offenders, some drug arrests and numerous citations for other offenses were issued. Zone I also worked in cooperation with the Local Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Chapter in coordinating these events.

Environmental Crimes

Police involvement in quality of life issues proved beneficial to several locations that are plagued with environmental hazards. Officers worked diligently with other non-law enforcement agencies such as Gaston County Code Enforcement, City of Gastonia Code Enforcement, Gaston County Health Department and the Gaston County Attorney's Office to insure that these environmental hazards were addressed. Most violations included high grass and accumulation of solid waste. A number of these violations involved foreclosed properties. A

proactive approach was then sought to retrieve all foreclosed property listings from the Clerk of Courts Office and each were distributed to the zone officers for periodic checks to see if any violations were occurring and needed to be resolved.

ZONE 2

ATV Trespassing

Officers in Zone 2 focused heavily on illegal ATV (4 wheeler and motorcycle) activities this year, centered mainly on illegal trespassing. We worked with several local police departments, state agencies, Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, CSX Railroad and private and corporate landowners. We focused on areas to include Killian Road, N. C. Highway 273, N. C. Highway 16, U. S. Highway 321, Lineberger Road, Green Road outside of Stanley, Robert Keever Estates area and High Shoals. We also



worked with Gaston County Parks and Recreation Department at both the county parks in the zone, Poston Park and North Belmont Park. During one operation, 400 "ATV Trespassing and Safety Laws" pamphlets were handed out to all the neighborhoods that border Poston Park. Officers were able to utilize two Kawasaki Rhinos that the department acquired through the Law Loan Program. Illegal ATV use leads to trespassing, property damage and personal injury.

Operation Medicine Cabinet

Operation Medicine Cabinet provides citizens with a safe location to drop-off old, unused, or expired medications. The medications can then be safely and cleanly destroyed. Old medications that are kept at home are either improperly disposed of by flushing or throwing them in the trash, or run the risk of being stolen. Operation Medicine Cabinet also helps keep our environment and water sources clean. In 2009, six "Operation Medicine Cabinet" operations were held in Zone 2, collecting approximately 644 pounds of medications.

Environmental Crime

Officers in Zone 2 continued their efforts this year involving environmental violations and related complaints, which include trash accumulation, high grass, junk vehicles and bulk waste. During 2009, there were thirty-three environmental complaints investigated by officers. Environmental violations can affect an entire area or neighborhood, not only in appearance, but also financially, by way of decreased property values. One major effort involved the area of Sandy Ford Road. Neighbors complained about trash and old tire debris that had

accumulated along the roadway. Officers worked with the Department of Corrections to enlist inmates in cleaning up the roadside. Overall, officers were very successful in encouraging violators to clean up their property.

ZONE 3

Officers in Zone 3 use a combination of directed patrol activities, community involvement, crime analysis, and consistent follow-up on cases to reduce crime. In 2009, this approach culminated a reduction of burglaries by 18%. Reports of larcenies were down by 10%, as well as Motor Vehicle theft by 13%. Overall, property crime has decreased by over 11%.

Community Involvement

A major part of the solution for the reduction of crime is the involvement of the Community. Zone 3 continues to support and develop the community watch programs. In 2009, there were 10 community watches, two more than in 2008. Country Meadows and Kings Grant are the newest groups. Officers also worked closely with the citizens through various community contacts and presentations to include Safe Kids, Crime Prevention for Seniors, Bicycle Safety and Think Smart and Alive 55 driving program for seniors. These outreach programs were held at day care centers and adult nutrition program locations across the county.

Environmental Crime

Quality of life for citizens is a priority. With the downturn of the economy over the last year, many citizens lost their homes to foreclosure. Officers in Zone 3 took a proactive response to this with began doing physical checks

on foreclosed homes to prevent crime and make sure these properties would not become environmental hazards.

Directed Patrol

Officers in Zone 3 have instituted operations in several locations with the assistance of other government agencies to address both crime and quality of life issues. Operation Clean Sweep II is directed at two mobile home parks located on US 321 South. This is in response to the level of calls, crimes and the quality of life for the residents. Two communities located off of Chapel Grove School Road have also been targeted due to the number of calls and drug complaints. In both instances, officers have been able to identify offenders and make arrests.

ZONE 4 (BESSEMER CITY)

Traffic Enforcement & Safety

A special emphasis was concentrated on traffic and safety issues in 2009. Numerous radar assignments and saturation patrols were conducted to reduce the number of vehicle crashes in areas where high volume traffic and pedestrian safety were prevalent. Officers in Zone 4 also participated in several of the Governor's Highway Safety Programs such as Booze and Lose It, No Need to Speed and R U Buckled. A special emphasis was also placed on the schools zones on North 12th Street, where three public schools are located 300 yards apart. The speed detection radar trailer was used on several occasions and radar assignments and overt patrols were conducted throughout the school year in an attempt to keep motorists traveling at the posted 25 MHP speed limit. Officers also created a Radar Watch program



Officers in the Community Policing Division control and prevent crime through regular patrols, answering calls for service, apprehending offenders, enforcing criminal and traffic laws, conducting preliminary investigations and working with the community to solve neighborhood crime problems.

in which several street locations were posted weekly on a new LED message board located in the downtown business district of Bessemer City. This informed the citizens of Bessemer City of the locations in which radar assignments would be conducted. The program was a success, well received by the citizens of Bessemer City.

Community Relations

Several special community projects were also initiated in Bessemer City during the year. One project placed a special emphasis on business checks within City limits. Every officer made contact with business owners and managers on a regular basis to ensure that their presence was known and to find out if they had any concerns requiring police intervention. These business checks were conducted at local businesses, as well as religious and financial institutions. The Department also developed a business security checklist in an attempt to make their establishments safer. The checklist will be updated with the owners and managers on an annual basis. Officers also conducted regular foot patrols in the business district during the year. As always, Zone 4 officers participated in local events such as the Down Home Festival, the Christmas Parade and the Christmas in the City event. The Bessemer City Community Watch groups remained active during 2009. There are now three Community Watch groups including East Lee Street, Central School Apartments and East Maine Street. They meet once a month to discuss issues in their communities.

Special Enforcement

Officers put a directed emphasis on special enforcement activities during the year, addressing

several public nuisance violations of concern to the citizens of Bessemer City. These included issues with skateboarders, homeless vagrants, animal control violations and loud disturbances at local establishments during the evening hours. Since initiating these special enforcement efforts, the number of complaints has decreased significantly.

MARINE ENFORCEMENT

The Marine Enforcement Unit started seasonal operations on June 8, 2009, and continued a full-time schedule until August 20th, maintaining a weekend and holiday schedule through October 1st and then, on an as needed basis. The Unit consists of four full-time and one part-time officer. The Unit utilizes a 23-foot McKee Craft boat and two jet skis for patrol.

The Department participated in the "Law Loaner" program offered through ALPHA Motorsports. Yamaha donated two wave runners for the 2009 boat season. The wave runners are utilized in special events and patrol areas of the lake inaccessible by larger watercraft.

The Unit has continued its partnerships with other agencies on the lake to keep the waterways safe. The Unit works closely with Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, N. C. Wildlife, S. C. Department of Natural Resources, Tega Cay Police Department, York and Lincoln County Sheriff's Marine Unit. The Lake Wylie and Mountain Island Marine Commission granted the Marine Enforcement Unit, along with the other agencies, policing authority over the waterways and shorelines of Lake Wylie. The duties of the Unit are to

enforce boating laws, conduct boating safety inspections, remove navigational hazards, answer calls for service, enforce shoreline laws and provide assistance to boaters and other governmental agencies.

Gaston Emergency Medical Services teamed up with the Marine Enforcement Unit during the July 4th week for a proactive approach to medical emergencies on the lake. The GEMS Paramedics carried all of their medical and diving equipment onto the boat. The Unit also provided security at the annual July 4th fireworks show on Lake Wylie and participated in the annual flotilla on Mountain Island Lake.

The Marine Enforcement Unit sent a member to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Charleston, SC, for an 80-hour Marine Patrol Officers Course-Instructor.

Educational Programs

- A member attended the International Boating and Water Safety Summit in

Marine Enforcement Stats

Calls for Service	<u>2009</u>
Dispatched Calls	65
Special Checks	307
Boat Assists	113
Boating Accidents	1
Enforcement Activities	
Safety Inspections	400
Boating Warnings	137
Boating Citations	68
Shore Violations	
Trespassing Violations	79
Citations/Arrests	9
Warnings (Written & Verbal)	101

Panama City, Florida, to promote the successful Flotation Citation Program.

- The Unit sponsored a booth at the CaroMont health fair to promote boater safety.
- Members attended the Regional Water Safety Conference held in Raleigh. There were agencies and organizations throughout the southeast in attendance. The Unit presented the Flotation Citation Program.
- The Unit once again teamed up with Harbortowne Marina and brought Chick-Fil-A on board to continue the reward program called "Operation Flotation Citation." The program promotes the use of life jackets among boaters under the age of 13 by rewarding boaters in compliance with the law. During safety inspections, if children under the age of 13 are wearing their life jacket as the law requires, the child receives a "Flotation Citation" good for one free slushy at the Harbortowne Marina. The goal of the program is to promote a positive message from area law enforcement to boaters about the importance of wearing life jackets. This program was also extended to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Marine Unit, NC Wildlife, SC Department of Natural Resources and the York County Sheriff's Office. The program is always received well by boaters.

Community Services

- The Unit partnered with other agencies to provide information about water safety and boater safety to adults and children at the Mid-Atlantic Boat Show in

Charlotte, N. C. This year, the booth consisted of the SPLASH trailer and a Gaston County Marine Enforcement Unit wave runner, along with printed material on display tables. The booth was manned at all times to answer questions about boat laws and needed equipment.

- Members spoke to participants involved in the Gaston County Police Citizens Youth Academy. This included the rules of navigation and the roles and responsibilities of the Marine Enforcement Unit. The participants in the academy were given a boat ride on Lake Wylie to better understand the functions of the equipment.
- The Unit partnered with Charlotte Mecklenburg Police, NC Wildlife, SC

Department of Natural Resources and York County Sheriff's Office to brief the command staff of each agency on the rising concerns on Lake Wylie and promote existing partnerships among the agencies.

- Members volunteered their time to participate in a cancer benefit called Captain Clueless to raise money for cancer awareness and help with expenditures of cancer survivors. HQ Marine sponsored the Unit and provided the boat to participate in the event.



The Marine Enforcement Unit is a seasonal unit that works to educate the general public about boating and water safety.

K-9 UNIT

Purpose

The K-9 Unit consists of six (6) handler and dog teams responsible for answering routine calls, responding to crimes in progress, performing street level drug interdiction and assisting all divisions of the Department by conducting specialized searches with trained law enforcement canines, including searches of houses and vehicles for illegal substances, searches of buildings for suspects, area searches for evidence and tracks of subjects. Other responsibilities include assisting other agencies in the region, and participating in drug and crime prevention activities by providing canine demonstrations to various civic organizations, community watches, and schools.

In 2009, the K-9 Unit experienced some changes in both K-9's and Handlers. One new dog came into service this year, and two handlers were transferred, making 2009 a year of transition for the Unit.

Unit Statistics

- There was an overall reduction of all K-9 activities for the year, except for building searches and building finds.
- The Unit assisted NC Probation and Parole on Halloween night again this year. K-9's were present to provide security and drug checks as sex offenders were required to report to the Gaston County Courthouse.
- The Unit also investigated street level drug complaints and worked with other departments and units to suppress drug activity.

In Loving Memory Of



K-9 Fin
August 10, 2009

When K-9 Fin retired in December, 2006, he was responsible for over 100 tracking finds, hundreds of vehicle searches, and locating more than \$2 million. After retirement, Fin lived with his handler, Sgt. W. P. Downey and his family. Fin had been diagnosed with an inoperable heart tumor.



A K-9 searches an area for evidence.

K-9 Unit Stats

	2007	2008	2009
Man Tracking Searches	152	160	140
Narcotic Searches	1,505	1,471	1,229
Narcotic Finds	212	313	224
Building Searches	35	24	36
Building Finds	6	7	9
Calls for Service	7,025	7,495	5,580
K-9 Arrests	434	713	373
Training Hours	2,062	1,703	2,301

INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

Highlights

- January - An individual was charged with homicide in a 2008 case involving the death of a female and an arson.
- April - May - CIU and the National Search Group STARR conducted a search for a missing person.
- Three men were charged in connection with an ATV theft ring.
- June - A homicide occurred at Old NC 27 Highway in Mount Holly. The suspect shot his girlfriend with a handgun.
- June - The Unit assisted Dallas Police with a bank robbery investigation that led to the arrest of two suspects.
- July - A kidnapping/armed robbery started at Canal Road and ended with the suspect being apprehended in Cherokee, SC. The FBI assisted with the investigation.
- July - CIU, SBI and South Carolina authorities investigated an officer-involved shooting that led to the death of a serial killer from Gaffney.

- A gang/drug-related shooting occurred inside Dallas. CIU assisted with the investigation. Multiple arrests were made for attempted murder and drug charges.
- October - A suspect charged with attempted murder and kidnapping, and was later apprehended with assistance from the US Marshal Service.
- November - Two homicides occurred. The victims' bodies were dumped in York County, SC. A joint investigation led to an arrest for both homicides.
- Throughout 2009, CIU recovered \$92,759 worth of stolen property.

Statistics

- CIU opened 510 general investigations in 2009; this represented a 27% increase when compared to the 414 investigations opened in 2008.
- There was a slight decrease in juvenile investigations with 118 juvenile cases opened during 2009 compared to the previous year of 136.

- Arrests for 2009 were 9% higher with 808 charges filed compared to 739 in 2008.
- Of the total cases investigated in 2009, over 19% involved burglaries to residences, businesses, motor vehicles or outbuildings.
- Larceny accounted for 11% of the total caseload, which represents a 6% increase from the previous year.
- Missing Person reports accounted

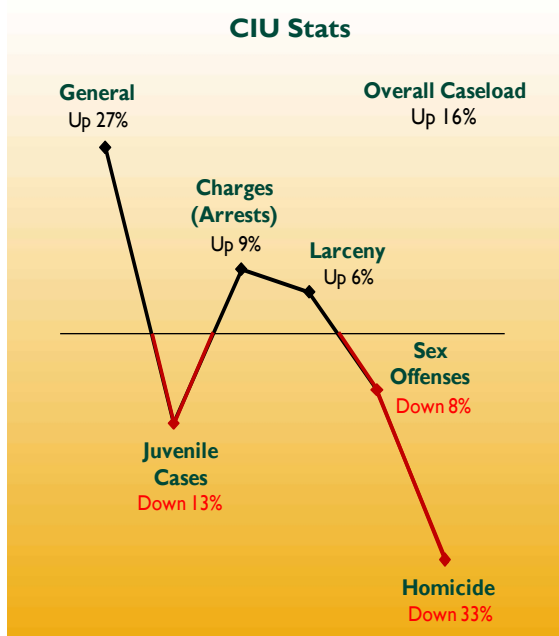
- for 9% of the caseload, with 72% of these were juveniles.
- Sex offenses accounted for 14% of cases, a decrease of 8% compared to 2008.
- Violent crime only accounted for 2% of the investigations, which represents a decrease from 2008.
- There was a 33% decrease in homicides in 2009, when compared to 2008.
- There were 75 unattended deaths requiring preliminary investigation. This represented a 4% decrease from 2008.
- The remaining 27% of investigations included offenses such as assaults, frauds and other types of crimes.
- Overall, CIU experienced a 16% increase in caseload over 2008.

CRIME SCENE SEARCH UNIT

The Crime Scene Search Unit (CSSU) is primarily tasked with conducting crime scene searches and latent print identification. The Unit is comprised of four full-time employees and one part-time. The Unit offers certified expertise in evidence identification, collection, preservation and documentation. Due to the dedication of its members, the unit has an excellent reputation with other agencies, resulting in frequent requests for crime scene processing.

Highlights

- CSSU responded to 535 calls, a 12% decrease from 2008.
- The Unit assisted both local and state agencies 262 times, a 10% increase over 2008.
- Unit members responded and processed 535 crime scenes,



including 80 deaths, of which 4 were homicides and one officer-involved shooting.

- Approximately ,200 fingerprints from crime scenes were entered into the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Index System (IAFIS), resulting in 48 prints being identified.
- The Unit conducted 153 NarTest analyses to identify illegal substances.
- CSSU conducted fingerprinting at the request of citizens for job or school applications. A total of 308 people were fingerprinted in 2009.
- The Delta Sphere system was updated with the most current software in November. It reduces the amount of time needed for crime scene reconstruction by 50%.
- Two members were re-certified in the use of NarTest.
- The Delta Sphere system was used in an arson for the first time. The scene was completely blackened by the fire.
- The Unit was utilized by Lincoln County Sheriff's Office to train field training officers in crime scenes. Six officers were trained in two-week sessions for Lincoln County.
- CSSU was utilized by SBI in January to conduct a crime scene investigation at an officer - involved shooting in Dallas.
- The Unit solved a series of break-ins in the northern part of the County after prints were obtained from the crime scene and ran through IAFIS, identifying the suspect. Several old break-ins have been reopened or solved due to re-submittal of prints through the updated IAFIS system.
- Detective Propst was assigned on a full-time basis to the Computer Forensic

component in October to evaluate the need to expand. During 2009, Computer Forensics worked on several phones and computers from 2 homicides and 1 kidnapping.

- The Unit obtained several pieces of equipment, including a manual phone examiner, cell phone jammer and mobile phone accessories for the F.R.E.D. System.

PROPERTY & EVIDENCE

The Property and Evidence Unit is responsible for the storage and maintenance of all items seized by the Department during criminal investigations. In order for an item of evidence to be admissible in court, its "chain of custody" must be maintained. This means the evidence must be housed in a secure area, and each person having contact with the evidence is documented. This information is used later at trial to show the item is in the same condition as it was when it was first collected. To accomplish this goal, the Unit has one sworn officer in charge of the evidence room. Each item of evidence is logged and classified using a modern barcode tracking system. Once a criminal prosecution has been completed, the evidence must be returned to the rightful owner, destroyed or forfeited, depending on the disposition of the charges and the type of property seized. All illegal contraband is destroyed, regardless of the disposition of the criminal charges.

In 2009, the Unit focused on clearing out and disposing of evidence from older cases housed in the evidence room. Older cases involving guns, money and jewelry were targeted. Through this focused effort, the Unit disposed of 75 firearms and

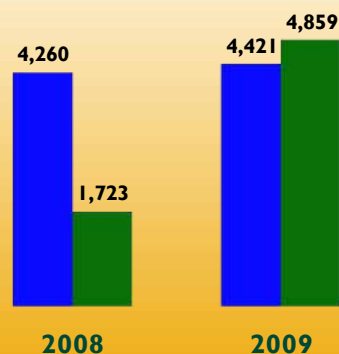
turned \$10,166 in seized money over to the Gaston County School Board.

The Unit continued using NC General Statute §15-12(b), which allows unclaimed bicycles to be given to non-profit organizations for charitable purposes. During 2009, the Unit donated 10 reconditioned bicycles to be given to needy children.

The Unit participated in a weapons tracing project sponsored by the US Department of Justice, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau (ATF) again. The project, E-Trace, allows law enforcement agencies to track the sale and movement of a gun from manufacturer through each change of ownership. For each firearm that is logged into the property and evidence room, the Evidence Officer accesses the ATF database and enters a description and possessor information. The information entered adds another link in the chain of movement for each gun seized. Approximately 158 firearms were entered into the ATF database in 2009, compared to 137 in 2008.

Property & Evidence Stats

■ Property In ■ Property Out



SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

OVERVIEW

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) of the Gaston County Police conducts investigations focusing on narcotics, gambling, illegal alcohol sales and prostitution. The Unit is a team of 6 Investigators, 2 Sergeants and 1 Captain who initiated 375 cases in 2009, which resulted in over 800 criminal charges being filed against more than 80 offenders. During the course of those investigations, over 3 million dollars' worth of drugs were seized.

Separate from cases initiated within SIU, the unit is available to provide substantial assistance to the Department's Community Policing Division and other specialized units. This assistance

can entail basic narcotics identification up to surveillance, search warrant executions and technical support. The Unit is available to work closely with all of the municipal police departments in Gaston County as well as other regional counties. A mutually beneficial relationship with the NC State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) is on-going with an SBI field agent working part-time out of the Department's headquarters.

The Unit also works closely with NC Probation and Parole investigators. Federal level casework was conducted in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Federal

Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF).

Seized Assets/Forfeitures

In 2009, the Department was awarded over \$68,000 by the US Customs and Border Protection. This dollar amount represents numerous cooperative narcotics investigations between the Unit and Customs agents. Many of the cases originated in Gaston County and had connections far beyond the area. These funds are used for law enforcement purposes such as equipment that might not otherwise be available to the Department. The Gaston County Police Department also received over \$23,000 as a result of the NC Unauthorized

SIU Stats

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
Cases Opened	375	238	302	298	374
Cases Cleared	181	141	169	260	186
Persons Charged	81	72	162	169	123
Number of Charges	853	622	916	1,420	1,151
Searches	110	44	76	111	79
Surveillance (Hours)	753	837		983	686
Undercover Buys	217	151	152	153	172
Marijuana Plants Seized	44	4	209	56	85
Other Marijuana Seized (Grams)	49,820	709,584	422,385	25,401	38,555
Cocaine Powder Seized (Grams)	25,279	527	11,046	74,039	59,000
Crack Cocaine Seized (Grams)	2,032	454	265	682	549
Pills Seized (Dosage Units)	3,555	4,432	55,048	18,937	3,631
Heroin (Packets)	139	4	0	32	17
Methamphetamine (Grams)	2	776	1,295	220	276
Cash Seized	\$95,031	\$20,411	\$224,764	\$22,029	\$307,625
Street Value of Drugs Seized	\$3,166,064	\$2,444,633	\$7,781,809	\$8,795,205	\$8,420,886

Substance Tax, which is levied against those found to be in possession of illegal narcotics.

Community Impact Targets

The Unit continues to work closely with the Community Policing Division's Zone Captains in support of their crime abatement efforts addressing narcotics-related crimes within high-risk neighborhoods. We strongly believe that many property crimes can be traced back to illegal narcotics use by offenders. Therefore the Unit investigations endeavor to look beyond just drugs and attempt to make connections to thefts and burglaries. When such connections are found, Zone Captains are notified and the Criminal Investigations Unit is involved in the case. Community Policing Division's officers are also encouraged to develop drug-related information within their

work areas to be able to better address problems that impact the entire community. These cases are worked at the patrol level and also in conjunction with the Unit.

Heroin

In 2009, the Unit saw heroin seizures more than double compared to the previous 4 years. This was a result of directed enforcement actions as well as a resurgence of the drug. In response, the Unit teamed up with the DEA and other state and local agencies from our area to create an alliance focusing on heroin. Meetings will take place to share information and address/attack trends related to heroin importation, distribution and use in the Charlotte, NC region.

Cocaine Investigation

Officers from the Community Policing Division initiated a crack cocaine investigation based on a traffic stop early in 2009. This investigation was turned over to the Unit for additional casework. The network of cocaine and crack cocaine sellers quickly led to Charlotte, NC, Florida and Arizona. The case resulted in the arrest of several high-level drug dealers involved in the sale of multiple kilos of crack cocaine and powder cocaine. This case was aided by the DEA and Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department.

Manpower

In 2009, the Unit saw a shift in manpower as two agents and one sergeant moved on to other positions within the

Department. Their knowledge and expertise will be missed and not quickly replaced. The Department filled those openings and took the opportunity to fill a long-standing unit vacancy which brought the agent total to six, allowing for additional proactive casework as the Unit aggressively investigates illegal narcotics, gambling, prostitution and illegal alcohol sales.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (ERT)

The Emergency Response Team is a group of highly trained officers who are available 24 hours a day to respond to critical and high-risk incidents. When requested, the ERT supports other law enforcement agencies in Gaston County as well as neighboring jurisdictions. The ERT is divided into three closely knit teams that work together to accomplish a mission. The teams are Negotiators, Marksman/Observers and Tactical Entry. Each group has a designated team leader who reports to the ERT commander. All are unified in their goal to see every situation resolved peacefully and without injury to innocent bystanders, team members, or the suspect. Team members from the Dallas and Cramerton Police Departments are also part of the ERT.

The ERT participates in an annual training academy which entails a week of intense and varied training at an accelerated pace that promotes team unity and skill development. Throughout the year, the team trains monthly to maintain necessary skills and gain effective knowledge of newly acquired equipment and tactics. Approximately 3,600 hours of tactical training were logged in 2009, covering topics from building searches to advanced firearms tactics.



Cooperative Training

The ERT continues its efforts to develop and maintain training relationships with neighboring jurisdiction tactical teams in an effort to enhance skills and develop new, innovative tactics. During scheduled monthly training, the ERT has partnered with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, Pineville Police Department and Gastonia Police Department teams.

Sniper Competition

A two-man marksman/observer team from ERT participated in the 3rd Annual Gastonia Sniper Conference that was held at the City of Gastonia Police Department's range in September. Twenty-nine teams competed in various events, covering everything from distance shooting and target acquisition to a strenuous obstacle course. The ERT marksman/observer element finished in 5th place.

Armored Vehicle

In May, the ERT took delivery of a new Lenco BearCat armored rescue vehicle. The BearCat replaced a 1972 Ford armored vehicle that had provided many years of service to the team. The BearCat equips the team with a safe platform to effect rescues and from which to negotiate with offenders at close range during high-risk situations. The BearCat



The ERT acquired a new Lenco BearCat in 2009 to replace its former 1972 Ford armored vehicle.

affords the team the advantage of superior ballistic protection, four-wheel drive maneuverability and seating space for a situational quick response group.

Realistic Training Scenario

During 2009, the ERT identified conducting realistic scenario training in real-world locations an emphasis on a quarterly basis. In October, the team collaborated with management and corporate security at Community One Bank in Dallas, NC, to conduct a mock bank robbery and hostage situation. The training incorporated actual bank employees from three local branches acting as role players. This scenario allowed team members the opportunity to train in a working bank and gave role players the chance to pre-plan their actions in the event of an actual bank robbery/hostage situation.

HAZARDOUS DEVICE UNIT (HDU)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Bomb Squad Advisory Board recognize the Gaston County Police Department's four member Hazardous Device Unit as an Accredited Bomb Squad. The Unit received its first accreditation in 1999, and was re-accredited in 2004 and 2009.

Only bomb units with highly advanced equipment, rigorous and continual training and meticulous operating procedures are eligible for accreditation.

Members of the Unit are required to be certified Bomb

Technicians, and must attend and successfully complete the FBI Hazardous Devices School. The school is six weeks of classes, practical field exercises and robotics operation, located at the US Army Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. Each member is also required to attend the Center for Domestic Preparedness' Hazardous Material School in Anniston, Alabama. Team members have also received training from OSHA in Confined Space Operations, and the NC State Fire Marshal's Office has trained team members as Hazardous Materials Technicians.

In 2009, the Unit continued to participate in Regional Training along with the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Gastonia City Police HDU and the Henderson County Sheriff's Office HDU and SWAT. The Gaston County Police HDU trains monthly in compliance with the standards set forth by the National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board. The Unit is among the top reporting agencies of incidents to the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms tracking system. The Unit has responded to locations in Gaston, Caldwell, Cleveland, Lincoln, Catawba and Iredell Counties.

Unit members train annually with the Department's tactical Emergency Response Team.

The Unit assisted Gaston County Schools and a local retirement community with training faculty and administration in bomb sweep procedures, bomb threats and explosive recognition and response.

SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

ACCREDITATION UNIT

The Department received initial accreditation in 1991 and has been reaccredited 5 times, most recently in 2008. The Department is currently operating under the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) fifth edition that contains a total of 463 standards, 379 of which we must show compliance. Because the Department does not assume responsibility for the jail and court house, those standards are not applicable.

Accreditation is an on-going process with the Gaston County Police Department. The CALEA accreditation program requires agencies to comply with standards in four (4) primary areas: policy and procedures, administration, operational procedures and support services. The Department's compliance with these standards will be assessed every 3 years.

Proof of compliance with these standards is reviewed and maintained on a daily basis through the Management Information Tracking System (MITS). This system provides the Unit with the ability to request supporting documentation from various units within the Department. The documentation illustrates that compliance with various standards is being maintained. Examples are use of force, employee grievances, employee evaluations and weapons proficiency.

The Department is also an active member of NCLEAN (North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Network) that meets six (6) times a year.

Preparation for the August 2011 re-accreditation has begun and will be accomplished through the hard work of all departmental personnel.

VICTIM & WITNESS COORDINATOR

The victim-witness coordinator provides referral assistance to victims and witnesses of all types of crimes and other traumatic incidents. Services offered may include emotional support, ensuring victims are informed of their rights and helping victims find and obtain appropriate resources.

Because of new victim notification requirements set by NC General Statutes, a new Domestic Violence pamphlet was designed to include a tear-off acknowledgement section. This section provides documentation as to whether or not the victim wishes to receive further notices about the status of the defendant during the pretrial process. This pamphlet also provides information on possible bail and pretrial release, local resource contact numbers, a safety plan, and safety planning if the victim is still in the relationship.

In 2009, approximately 179 victims were contacted either directly or through the mailing of domestic violence information pamphlets by the victim/witness coordinator.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The Educational Services Unit is comprised ten full-time School Resource Officers. These School Resource Officers are assigned to each of the nine County high schools and Warlick Alternative

School. The School Resource Officer Program for Middle Schools continued in the 2008-2009 school year, placing officers at WC Friday Middle School and Bessemer City Middle School. This year the Stanley Middle School was added as well. This program utilizes off-duty officers to staff the middle schools on a daily basis. School Resource Officers' primary duties are to ensure a safe school environment conducive to learning, act as a counselor in law-related issues, and act as a teacher of subjects related to law enforcement. The Gaston County Police Department continues to partner with Gaston County Schools, implementing programs and courses aimed at keeping the students and staff in a safe learning environment.

“Saved By The Belt”

This program was started as a way to increase seat belt usage among high school students. School Resource Officers promote seat belt use through education, involvement, evaluation and enforcement. Education is accomplished through posters, lectures and morning announcements. Each officer conducts monthly traffic surveys frequently with the assistance of involved students. Enforcement occurs as a result of the surveys and is directed at schools that have particularly low rates of seat belt use. When this program was initiated, the countywide rate of use was 74%. By December 2009, the average rate of use was above 97%. The Highland School of Technology continues to be the leader in seat belt use among the county's nine high schools.

Fatal Consequences

Fatal Consequences is another program initiated by the Unit. This program is designed to reduce drunk driving by teenagers through changing attitudes and increasing awareness. The program starts with a short lecture by an SRO. The classroom instruction discusses the hazards and penalties associated with teen drunk driving. The second part of this program gives students a practical look at how impaired vision affects driving. This is accomplished with the use of Fatal Vision (DWI simulation) goggles and a golf cart. While wearing the Fatal Vision goggles, students are asked to maneuver the golf cart through a course marked off with orange traffic cones. This provides students with a very real, but safe experience of how impaired vision and bad driving are directly related. To carry out this program, the Department purchased the Fatal Vision goggles, a golf cart and a trailer with which to haul it.

Crime Stoppers

The Crime Stoppers program is a non-Profit, anti-crime program designed to provide students a means to anonymously report criminal activity to the School Resource Officer. Students that provide information may become eligible for cash rewards.

School Resource Officers and school staff promote Crime Stoppers in all Gaston County Schools.

Silence Hurts

Silence Hurts, a program designed to reduce school violence, was continued this year with success. Silence Hurts encourages students to speak out

when they hear rumors of potential violent acts in school. They are encouraged to communicate through several means, either via the Crime Stoppers line, in written form through drop boxes located in schools, or on-line through their school sponsored website. On-line students can click on the Silence Hurts logo and report information anonymously through e-mail.

Citizens' Police Academy for Youth (CPAY)

The Academy is held during summer vacation at the Department. The CPAY is oriented to thirteen to sixteen year-olds and is intended to give them an in-depth look at law enforcement and the Department. Classes are held each day for one week. Classes cover various units including Crime Scene, Major Case Unit, Vice Unit, Lake Patrol, Bomb Squad and Emergency Response Team (SWAT). The Academy is directed by School Resource Officers and is taught by various officers from the Department.

Citizens Police Academy

This Academy is a seven-week program designed to provide Gaston County residents, in an academy setting, first-hand information about how their Police Department works. It is held twice a year, once in the spring and again in the fall. The academy requires a commitment of one Saturday morning for seven weeks for the spring session, or one Tuesday night for the fall session. Classes are held from 9:00 am until 11:30 am in the spring session and from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm in the fall. Classes are held at the Gaston County Police Department unless otherwise specified. There is no fee for the Academy. In 2009 the Citizens Police Academy graduated its 32nd and 33rd classes.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT UNIT

The Employee Training & Development Unit is responsible for identifying, preparing, coordinating and implementing



Many students participated in the Citizens' Police Academy for Youth this year.

training of new recruits, as well as providing in-service and on-going training for existing employees. The North Carolina Training and Standards Division requires a minimum of 24 hours of in-service training for all sworn law enforcement officers. The mandated courses for 2009 included: Legal Update; JMST-“In the Real World”; Career Survival -Training and Standards Issues; Domestic Violence; and, Drug Diversion for Patrol Officers. In addition, four (4) hours of firearms instruction is required with a mandated block of instruction covering Use of Force. Also, additional blocks of “Chief’s Choice” topics were presented to the officers. These topics included Examining False documents, Driving Lecture and Driving Practical.

2009 Highlights

In addition to the state mandated courses, the Department conducted additional in-service training. The additional training topics included: Interactions with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Domestic Violence Documents; Bias-Based Policing; ASP; OC; Taser; Blood Borne Pathogens;

Incident Command; and, Hazardous Materials.

The Department utilized the training rooms to host training for employees and other law enforcement agencies in the region. The training topics included: NC Justice Academy Telecommunicator Course; Remington Armorer; H+K Armorer; First Line Supervision; Death Investigations; ASP; OC; Taser; Law Enforcement Marine Unit Regional Training; Incident Command ICS 300; Incident Command ICS 400; and, firearms courses.

Department training rooms were also used for functions such as the Citizens Police Academy, Crime Stoppers, Safe Kids, Community Watch meetings, 55 Alive, Animal Control Task Force, Department of Juvenile Justice meetings, North Carolina Wildlife Safe Boating Course and Citizens Police Academy for Youth. Other organizations utilizing the Department’s Community Room included the Gaston Chamber of Commerce, Gaston County Schools

(numerous divisions of the school system), Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, NC Probation and Parole, Bessemer City, Animal League of Gaston County and numerous community-oriented groups. Several courses for firefighter certification, taught through Gaston College, were held at the Department as well.

The Department utilized the Blackboard educational web site to conduct training throughout the year. On-line courses included: Blood Borne Pathogens; Haz-Mat; Juvenile Minority Sensitivity Training; Career Survival; Domestic Violence; and, Driving Lecture. The on-line training allowed officers to participate as time allowed without removing officers from their assigned shifts.

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION UNIT

The Recruitment and Selection Unit is responsible for receiving and reviewing incoming applications, conducting interviews and background

Employee Development &

	2009
	Hours
Roll-Call	604
Career Development	559
Specialized	818
Advanced	633
BLET	1,872
Continuing Education	5,785
Field Training	2,044
State In-Service	5,772
Dept. In-Service	1,022



Officers participate in departmental training that is organized by the Employee Training and Development Unit.

investigations, and screening applicants through relevant job related testing. During 2009, the Recruitment and Selection Unit received and processed 951 applications. This included 40 Police Officers, 610 Telecommunicators, 104 Police Information Processing Specialists, 45 Animal Control Aides and 152 Animal Control Specialists. As a result, a total of 16 applicants successfully completed the Department's rigorous hiring process. The positions filled included 2 Police Officers, 12 Telecommunicators, one Police Information Processing Specialist and one Animal Control Aide.

On-Line Recruiting

This past year the Recruitment and Selection Unit has placed their Recruitment and Hiring Forms on-line. Applicants can now download and print the forms needed to apply for Police Officer, Animal Control and Telecommunicator positions. In addition, recruitment brochures and interest cards can be viewed and completed on-line. As a result, recruiters can respond to inquiries that are received via e-mail, and applicants can begin completing forms without delay. This eliminates approximately 4 days of downtime per applicant, which would be required to mail out and receive these forms back. It also eliminates the cost of making copies and postage for mailing. A savings of over \$400 was realized in 2009, and a savings of \$800 is predicted annually. To support the on-line process, the Unit created an Applicant Contact Form, which is completed by applicants at Human Resources. The form includes electronic contact information and allows recruiters

to submit Background Packets to applicants. Another on-line enhancement has been the addition of the Criminal Justice Training Standards and SBI requirements for Police Officer and Telecommunicator Certification. Applicants can now tell whether or not they are eligible for employment based on mandated standards. This self-screening practice helps to reduce the time personnel must spend eliminating ineligible applicants.

Interest Cards

The Recruitment and Selection Unit designed and began using interest cards to obtain information from potential applicants. These cards are inserted into the recruiting brochures and also distributed by department recruiters. Since July of 2009, 23 cards have been returned resulting in the hire of 2 employees. An on-line version is also available and can be forwarded via e-mail to the Recruitment and Selection Unit.

Recruitment Brochures

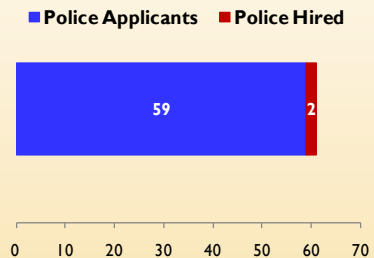
Since July, the Unit has tracked the number of brochures picked up by potential applicants. A brochure rack was placed in the lobby to accommodate applicants who arrive outside of normal business hours. During the last six months, 7 Animal Control, 40 Police Officer, and 83 Telecommunicator brochures were taken. As with the interest cards, the brochures can now be viewed on the Department's website.

Background Investigators' Resource Manual

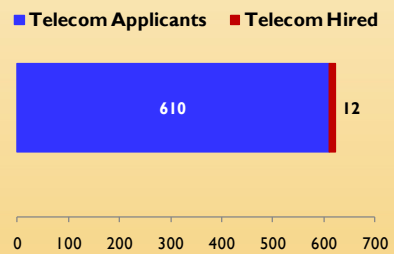
A manual was created to assist new officers who may be assigned to the Recruitment and Selection

Applicants Versus Hires

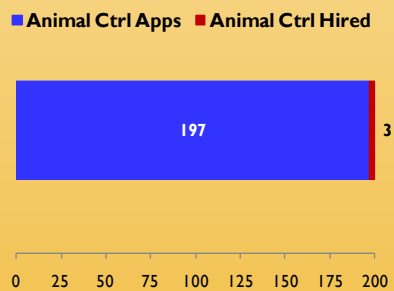
Police Officers



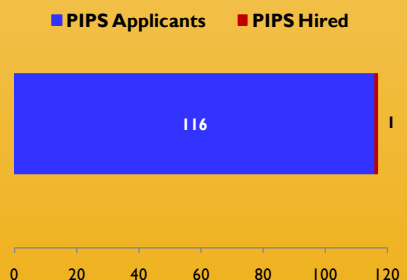
Telecommunicators



Animal Control Officers



Police Information Specialists



Unit. The manual includes relevant training standards, background forms, background questions and contact numbers. The manual gives instructions on how to read credit reports, military discharge and re-enlistment codes. The manual also includes Equal Employment Opportunity Guidelines, DCI operator and police officer certification requirements and a copy of the NC Class B Misdemeanor Guide. In addition, an example of an applicant notebook was assembled and can serve as a quick reference. A separate Recruitment and Retention MITS Report Notebook was also developed, and is used to assist future background investigators with completing mandatory reports.

Job Fairs / College Contacts

During 2009, members attended a Public Safety/Criminal Justice Job Fair at Western Carolina University. During this visit they interacted with and distributed

interest cards to 23 potential applicants. The event was strictly limited to Police and Public Safety Agencies. Recruiters also visited and made contact with faculty and staff at Cleveland County Community College and at Appalachian State University. Brochures and interest cards were distributed, and recruiters had the opportunity to meet with Criminal Justice Faculty and Career Counseling Staff. The Unit continues to maintain a relationship with Gaston College's BLET Faculty, which has resulted in the successful recruitment and hiring of a police officer applicant from the BLET Program.

Community Contacts

The Unit made various contacts with the public during the year. These contacts involved interaction with groups or individuals and included the Department's Citizens Police Academy, Gaston College's Firefighter I Communications Class, Gaston County's Annual

Cotton-Ginning Days and Stanley's Fall Festival. During each of the events, personnel spoke with the public about available employment opportunities within the Department. A total of 56 brochures and interest cards were distributed.

Minority Recruiting

During 2009, the Department continued to show an effort towards recruiting minority employees. The effort is reflected in the diversity of the department's Recruiting Team members. Sixty-seven percent of the team is made up of female and minority members. In addition, with the assistance of the Gaston County Chapter of the North State Law Enforcement Officers Association (NSLEOA), brochures and interest cards have been provided in an attempt to recruit minority employees through contact with NSLEOA members.

RECORDS

Maintaining its commitment to be accessible to the public at all times, the Records Unit is open 24 hours a day at the Department headquarters on Franklin Boulevard in Gastonia. The Unit provides access to the department's NCIC files as required, and provides information and services to the general public, department personnel and other local law enforcement agencies as needed. The main responsibility of the Unit is the maintenance, storage and retrieval of police records. The Unit is usually the first point of contact for the Department. The Records Unit at the Bessemer City substation is staffed from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. every day. After hours, a



The new recruitment brochure for police officers.

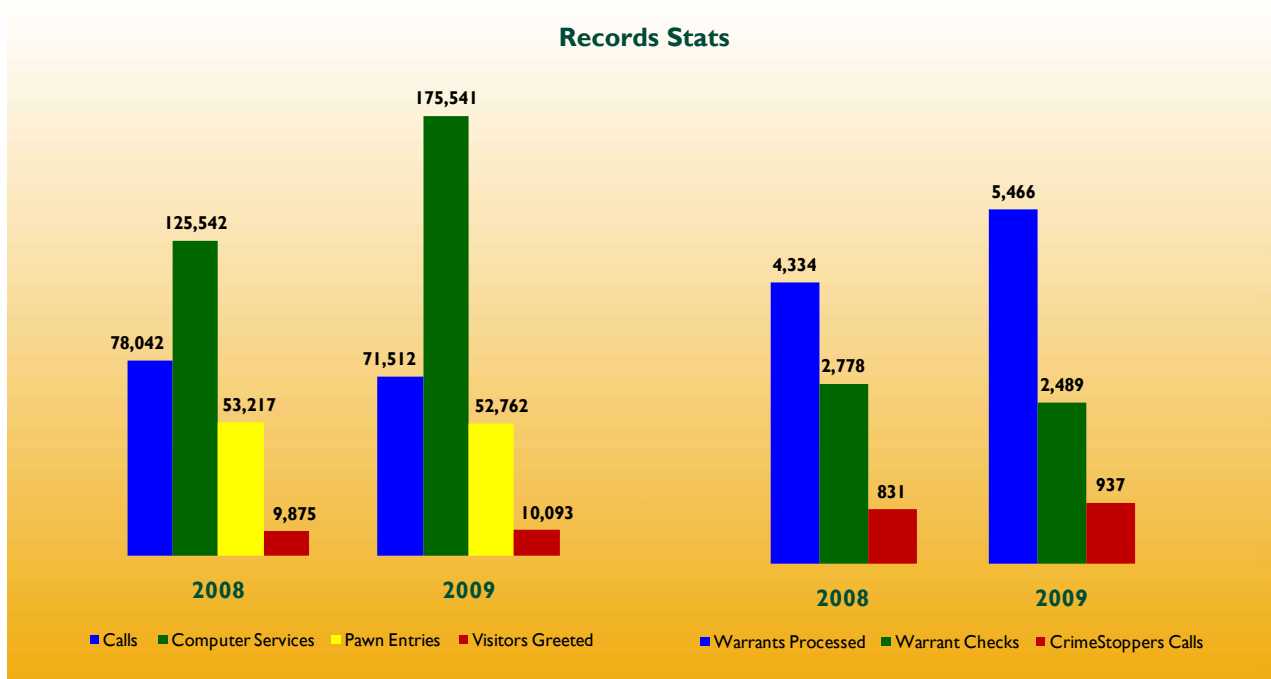
telephone call box outside of the office provides the public a direct connection to Gaston County Communications, and any telephone calls made directly to the Bessemer City substation are automatically forwarded to the Records Unit at headquarters, providing citizens with consistent service. The primary function of staff at the Bessemer City substation is data entry of pawn tickets, but they also provide assistance to visitors and officers by accessing "Law Enforcement Records Management Software" (LERMS) and NCIC/DCI as requested. While no new projects were undertaken in 2009, staff maintained its usual level of service. Staff consistently completed the data entry of citation and warning tickets, accident reports, vehicle tow and storage reports and pawn tickets. In addition, staff managed the merging of records from Mobile into New World LERMS, checking for duplications and verifying addresses. Files were maintained for cases involving

supplemental paperwork. In addition, other documents, such as statements, rights forms, photographs, etc. were scanned into LERMS. Having this paperwork scanned into LERMS has assisted the District Attorney's Office with court preparation and almost completely eliminated the time delay in having to photocopy and carry files over.

Because of advancements in technology, staff is no longer responsible for the data entry of case reports, supplements and arrests. The Unit's focus has turned to quality control. The Unit has assisted throughout the year with audits to ensure that reports are correct, including correcting IBRs errors, overridden addresses, verifying charges on environmental crime reports, updating offense coding on county death investigation cases and assisting officers with updating case status when warrants are served.

The Unit maintains an e-mail

account to receive pawn records from three local pawn shops and requests for copies of police reports from citizens. In 2009, a total of 143 requests were received. Staff satisfied 42 of the requests, referred 91 to other agencies for assistance and was unable to assist with 10 because too little information was provided.



ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION

OVERVIEW

The Animal Control Division witnessed many exciting developments in 2009, continued positive trends in animal placement, developed new initiatives in complaint investigations, and expanded community outreach. The Division remains proud in its commitment to providing the highest standard of service possible. In reviewing the past year's activities, one can clearly see how actions taken in 2009 further the Division's mission of providing animal-related services, reflecting our professionalism and concern for public health and the legal treatment of animals.

In recognizing and responding to growing community interest in stray animal placement, the Division continued to place animals in unprecedented numbers. With opportunities for interested persons to view sheltered pets both in person and online, 3,271 animals were reclaimed by their owners, adopted to new owners or

claimed by various rescue/humane groups for permanent placement in 2009. This represents a 35% placement rate for total animal intake and is nearly 3 times more than the comparative figure, just 4 years ago. Similarly, 87% of the Division's total intake was euthanized in 2005, compared to 61% currently. Statistically significant in its own right, total intake does include wildlife, rabies suspects and other animals which would not be candidates for placement.

As a result of enhanced viewing options, staff outreach and accommodation, as well as passion and commitment of rescue/humane group volunteers, these startling statistical comparisons clearly illustrate the ongoing evolution of our shelter from its traditional role of stray animal impoundment and population control to an animal placement center. The chart below (bottom left) depicts total animal impoundment figures along with pet placement numbers, for the past 5 years.

Upon closer inspection, individual species data illustrates even more dramatically, the positive impact of developing such close working relations with an ever-expanding network of humane/rescue group volunteer contacts. The Division received 4,453 dogs in calendar year 2005. Of that figure, only 14% were adopted or reclaimed by their owners. In 2009, 4,548 dogs were received, yet a significant 60% were placed. The graph below (bottom right) reflects a relatively consistent canine intake for the past 5 years, yet a significant increase in canine placement.

Although the challenge of unwanted animal placement has been accepted by our community, staff and rescue partners, the primary mission of the Animal Control Division remains protecting citizens from animals and the threat of animals. Enforcement of State and local laws and response to citizen calls for service, represent a vital and indeed, core level of responsiveness and interaction

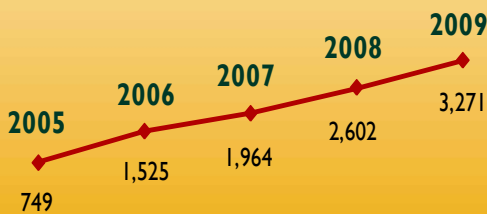
Animal Intake



Canine Intake



Animal Placement



Canine Placement



the Division has within the community. In 2009 Animal Control officers investigated 27,891 calls. While representing only a modest increase from 2008, the figure reflects an annual average of 2,535 calls per officer or supervisor, nearly twice the State average. For comparison, surrounding counties and their average calls per officer are reflected below (bottom left).

Neither satisfied nor content with simply following the time worn pattern of calls received and calls answered, the Division began an effort to more effectively utilize available technology and become more proactive in reducing the volume of calls received. Through call computation and analysis, the Division identified specific areas of the County with high reporting of animal-related complaints. In response, door-to-door canvassing activities were conducted to increase public awareness of animal-related problems in the area, educate citizenry on responsible pet ownership, including spay/neuter

options and enforce State laws and local ordinances. The simple goal was to reduce calls for service in these areas. Two canvassing activities were conducted in 2009, in which officers visited a total of 311 residences. Immediately following the June, 2009 canvassing activity, the number of licenses purchased and the number of vaccinations obtained increased significantly. The graph below (bottom right) shows significant increases in both license purchased and vaccinations obtained over the same time period in 2008.

Without question, the Division's canvassing activities resulted in an increase in pet owners' compliance with State Law and local ordinances, as well as enhancing community health and safety through increased pet rabies vaccinations.

In an ongoing effort to increase community involvement and public awareness of animal-related issues, staff conducted 14 educational programs and participated in four Christmas

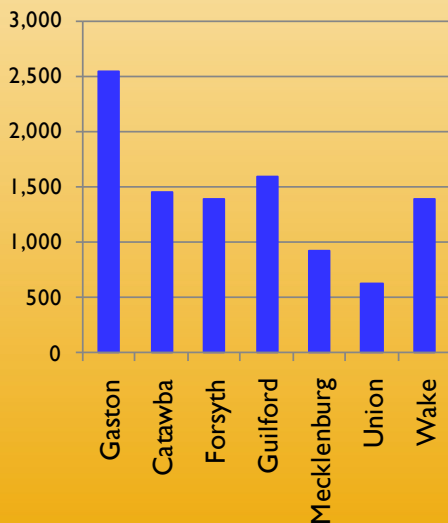
parades. Staff, along with volunteers, also participated in adoption events at Sims Park and Earl Tindol Ford.

In conclusion, the Division placed more animals and investigated more calls in 2009 than ever before. Outreach to rescue and humane groups continue to expand, as does the utilization of technology and community involvement. Along with its volunteer partners, the Division welcomes the leadership role in bringing in a new era of legal, humane and responsible pet ownership.

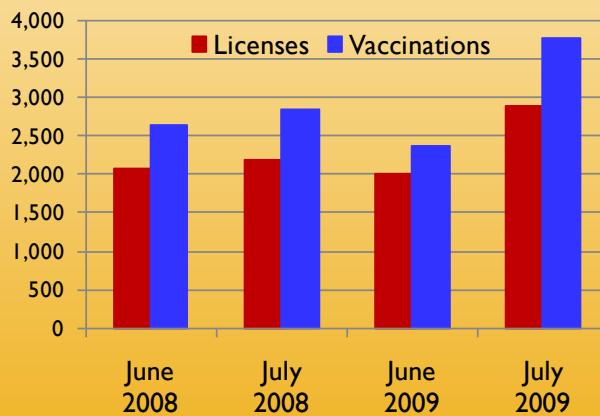
Calls For Service



Animal Control Calls Per Officer



Licenses Purchased & Vaccinations Obtained Comparison



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

HIGHLIGHTS

The Communications Division continued its efforts to upgrade critical systems and infrastructure this year in order to increase reliability and dependability. A number of projects were also completed or advanced this year. Efforts to reduce employee turnover and stabilize staffing levels continued. The challenge the Division faces is providing the highest level of services possible within the current budget constraints. To this end, this Division's operating budget was reduced by nearly 3% this past fiscal year.

CURRENT PROJECTS

A new emergency generator was installed at the Center. It will provide superior reliability and uninterrupted operations in the event of an electrical service failure.

The aging communication lines that relay signals and data to the Center have been replaced with fiber-optic cable. This project provided a more redundant and reliable transmission medium than the old copper wire. Fiber-optic cable is impervious to lightning and reduces the vulnerability of the Center from thunderstorm damage.

A new fire detection and alarm system has been installed, which will increase fire protection for all the agencies that share the building, including the Communications Division.

TECHNOLOGY

The Gastonia Police Department provided three new radio consoles for the backup 911 facility. Replacement of the County's two aged radio consoles located at the facility is also planned. The new equipment will

ensure continuation of radio communications if the primary Center is ever compromised.

The obsolescent paging transmitters were replaced with new, more powerful units that increase the effective range and reliability of the notification system used by numerous County agencies.

A new radio "Command" channel has been established which provides additional County-wide communications capabilities for fire and EMS field operations on-site at emergency incidents.

An evaluation and cost assessment is currently being conducted for the replacement of the 12-year old 911 emergency telephone system switch. The new phone equipment will better prepare the Center to receive VOIP, text messages and even photos from cell-phones in the future.

New siren controller units have been installed, which will provide more efficient, verifiable

emergency-alert siren activations in the event of a nuclear incident affecting Gaston County.

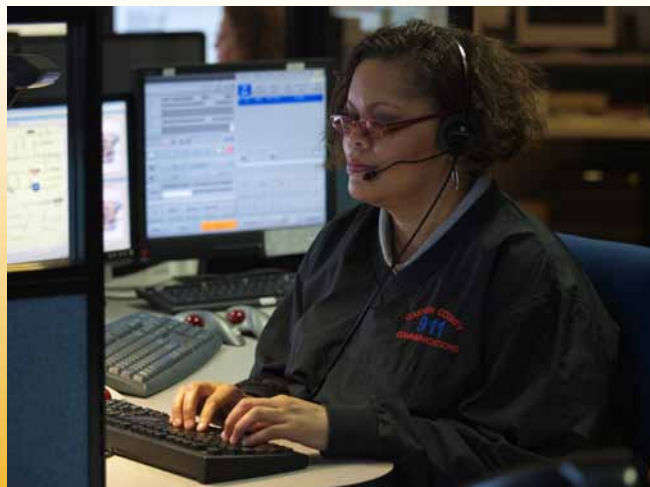
The 911 Computer Assisted Dispatch System (CAD) was upgraded in 2009. The upgrade has enhanced system performance and versatility.

The latest version of EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatch) software was installed in CAD to provide more efficient and accurate call-processing of 911 emergency medical calls.

An upgraded digital audio recorder was installed which provides additional levels of redundancy for the archiving of crucial 911 call and radio channel recordings.

INTEROPERABILITY

Testing of the regional interoperable radio network (MotoBridge system) is regularly conducted to ensure that the inter-County communications system remains functional.



Telecommunicators answer 911 emergency calls and dispatch fire, medical and law enforcement agencies county-wide

This Division continues to partner with the NC Highway Patrol in co-locating radio tower sites and associated technology that would benefit Gaston and the State while sharing costs.

TRAINING

A total of 17,208 hours were devoted to Training. 3,867 hours of those (23% of total hours) were dedicated to basic training of new-hires. These figures are indicative of our ongoing aggressive efforts to train our new-hires as intensively as possible to resolve staffing vacancies. This agency remains fully NIMS (National Incident Management) compliant this year. NIMS qualification has been federally mandated as a condition for receiving a number of grants. All active personnel meet current federal requirements. A total of 1,167 hours were devoted to Quality Assurance Reviews.

INCIDENT HISTORIES & RECORDINGS

This year, the Division provided 873 Incident Histories in response to external requests for information and/or records. We also created 436 audio recordings of telephone and incident radio traffic. These requests required 474 employee-hours of processing time for delivery of these services.

CALLS FOR SERVICE

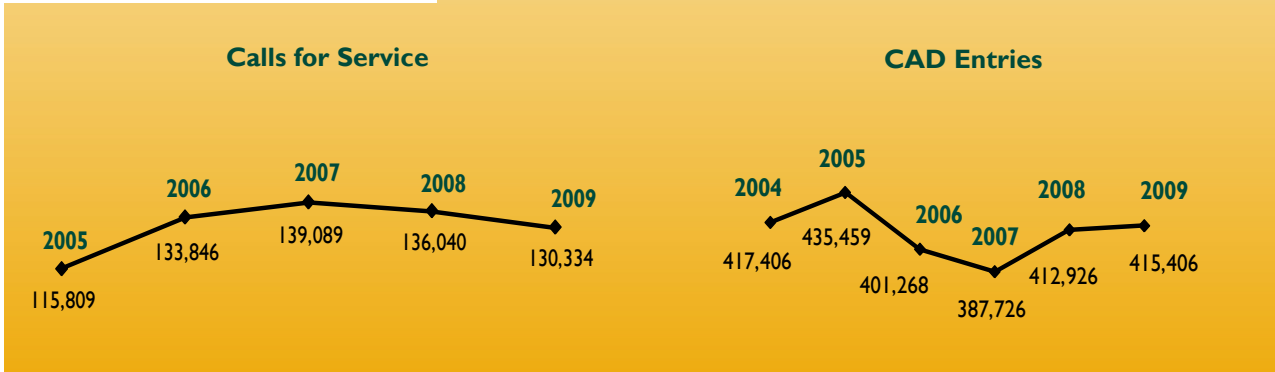
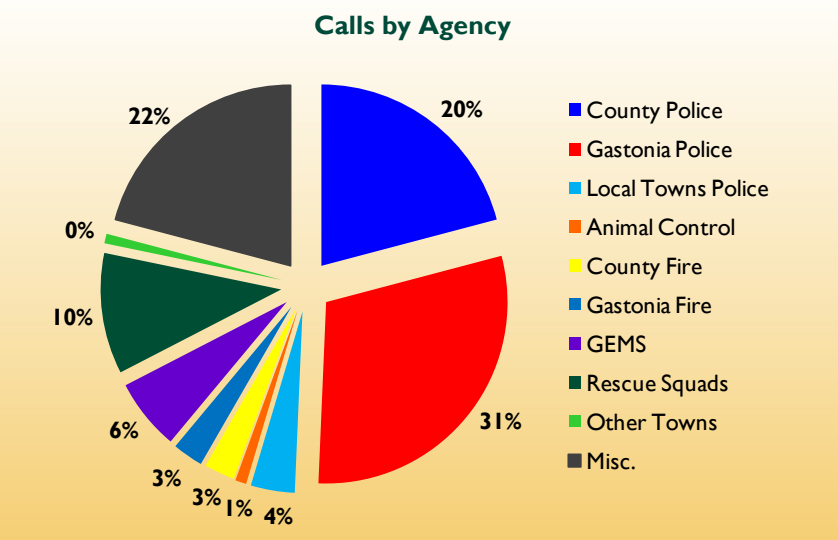
The Division received 130,334 emergency calls in 2009, with 97% of calls are answered within the 20-second standard, an increase from 95% in 2008. The increase is attributed to the increased number of new-hires reaching a fully trained status. A total of 493,762 telephone calls were handled by the Division in 2009.

The truest measure of the Division workload is the number of 911 calls plus the number of CAD dispatches. As a multi-venue agency that dispatches police, fire and EMS, a single 911 call may result in multiple emergency services being dispatched to the incident by

multiple Telecommunicators. The Division is also faced with callers requesting assistance, who are not fluent in English. The Division subscribes to Language Line, a commercial operation that provides translators who can be brought into a conferenced, live telephone call when needed to assist our Telecommunicators. The service was used on 423 occasions in 2009.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Total CAD entries for 2007 were 387,726 and 412,926 in 2008. This figure increased again in 2009 to 415,406 transactions.





GASTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT
420 West Franklin Boulevard
Post Office Box 1578
Gastonia, NC 28053-1578
Phone (704) 866-3320 · Fax (704) 866-3314
www.gastoncountypolice.org