



November 30, 2015

DPS PR# 15-034

New Patrol Unit to Help Manage Violent Crime Cases in the Y-K Delta

(BETHEL, Alaska) – The Alaska State Troopers Bethel Patrol is adjusting the way it responds to significant violent crimes in Yukon-Kuskokwim (YK) Delta posts. The Violent Offenders Unit (VOU) comprised of a patrol sergeant and two patrol troopers, pulled from the Bethel Patrol post, will provide dedicated intensive and focused investigations into violent crimes, to include murder, robbery, sexual assault, sexual abuse of a minor, and felony assault. Though this transition has been occurring since mid-September, the unit officially will be established on Dec. 1, 2015.

The YK Delta is an area comprised of 56 villages with public safety services provided by troopers assigned to 5 posts in the region. The YK Delta region, with a population of about 30,000 residents, historically has maintained some of the highest rates of violent crime in Alaska and the Nation. Department records show that over 24% of all Sexual Assault and Sexual Abuse of a Minor Cases, investigated by AST, were investigated by the Bethel Post Troopers.

“The creation of the VOU will allow other Bethel patrol troopers to focus on their assigned investigations and to provide more emphasis on community policing and village oversight,” said Alaska State Trooper Captain Barry Wilson, Commander of C Detachment. “While it is not possible to remove all significant crime investigation from the other patrol troopers, a percentage can be taken on to increase the productivity of the investigations across the region.”

The VOU will additionally be tasked with providing support to the Troopers in posts outside of the Bethel Post. This will often include adult and child victim interviews as part of the Bethel Multi-Disciplinary and Sexual Assault Response Teams.