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Commissioner

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Department of
Public Safety

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

19-009

First Time Rural Trooper Advanced Training Covering Topics of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assaults

April 9, 2019 (**Anchorage Alaska**) – During the first week of April, the Department of Public Safety held a Rural Trooper Training for the first time. The training covered topics that were all related to domestic violence and sexual assaults, to include tactical training, interview and interrogation, felony assaults (strangulation and child abuse), sexual assault and sexual abuse of minor investigations, responding to death investigations, technical crimes, crimes scene practicals and resiliency training.

The 10 Alaska State Troopers and Alaska Wildlife Troopers that attended the training came from Anchor Point, Bethel, Cordova, Kotzebue, Nome, Prince of Wales, St. Mary's, and Togiak. Tactical response consumed the first day of the week long training and was held at the Palmer PD range. The remaining topics were taught at the DPS Crime Lab in Anchorage.

"The topics covered in the training are taught at the Department of Public Safety Training Academy in Sitka; however, when a trooper works out in rural Alaska, they are frequently responsible for these investigations without back-up or the immediate ability to talk something through with a coworker or supervisor," said Lieutenant Rick Roberts. "Instead of thinking about what immediate steps have to be taken, they are learning to think in terms of – what am I going to need in the next 12 hours, or with very few resources."

The resiliency aspect of the training is crucial to DPS's retention of Trooper working in rural Alaska. Especially in C Detachment, there is a high volume of felony level calls to service. Managing the repeated calls for service for long periods of time can be exhausting and potentially taxing to a person's mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

"We want our troopers to know when and how to take care of themselves," said Roberts. "It is okay to seek out help and accept help. Let's face it, what our troopers deal with on a daily basis is stressful and often heartbreaking."

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