

2019 VAIL POLICE Annual Report





MESSAGE FROM CHIEF HENNINGER

2019 was a productive year for Vail PD. Of course, we enjoyed the usual jam-packed calendar of festivals, music and sporting events here in Vail, and carried out our steadfast goal to strive, every day, to earn our community's trust, protect the people's welfare and ensure the well-being of our employees. Our staff takes pride in volunteering to support community outreach efforts, and their dedication to excellent police service is evident in the following pages. But this year, our love for this community and our determination to serve and protect helped us to develop an expanded focus on wellness and mental health services for both our community members and our staff, an outstanding achievement made possible by the collective devotion of our whole Department.

Building on the county-wide efforts made by Vail Health's Eagle Valley Behavioral Health and other community nonprofits, Vail PD provided leadership to the efforts by joining the One Mind Campaign championed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. To participate, law enforcement agencies must pledge to implement four practices to ensure successful future interactions between police officers and persons with mental illness.

Vail PD was also awarded a substantial co-responder grant to assist with the mental health crisis in Eagle County. 100% of the money will go to funding additional mental health clinicians for the Hope Center which partners with the Community Paramedic

Program and Vail PD. Some of the most unpredictable calls that come through our county 9-1-1 dispatch center involve mental health and / or substance abuse issues. Positive outcomes of using the co-responder model to optimize law enforcement response to these calls include a 64% decrease in the number of mental health commitments and 76% decrease in the number of emergency room visits. This partnership makes us more compassionate and capable of helping those in need.

Our team has long been well-versed in proven crisis intervention techniques, and while we will always choose de-escalation techniques and conversation before enforcement whenever possible, 2019's sharpened awareness of mental health needs has only improved our ability to serve and protect. Officers and Dispatchers have all pulled together to learn and implement best practices for supporting and assisting community members experiencing mental distress. I am very proud of the work done by the men and women of Vail PD to promote this community-wide mental health initiative.

To our community and our Town Manager Scott Robson, thank you for your faith in us and your support for our efforts.

DWIGHT HENNINGER
POLICE CHIEF

WHERE WE ARE HEADED

The new Vail Police strategic plan positions the Department to be its best version of itself in 2020-2024.

After several years of implementing our 2016-2020 strategic plan, the Vail PD began a new strategic planning process with the help of Civic Canopy, a community-based nonprofit focused on connecting diverse groups of people and equipping them with tools to create meaningful and lasting impact.

WE PLEDGE TO:

- Inspire a strong affiliation with our community
- Protect life and property
- Divert mentally ill individuals away from the criminal justice system
- Reduce harm on roadways
- Address the challenges of serving a major resort town
- Prioritize the health and resiliency of our employees

MISSION

To deliver exemplary policing with respect, pride and integrity.

VISION

Serving and inspiring a safe and engaged community.

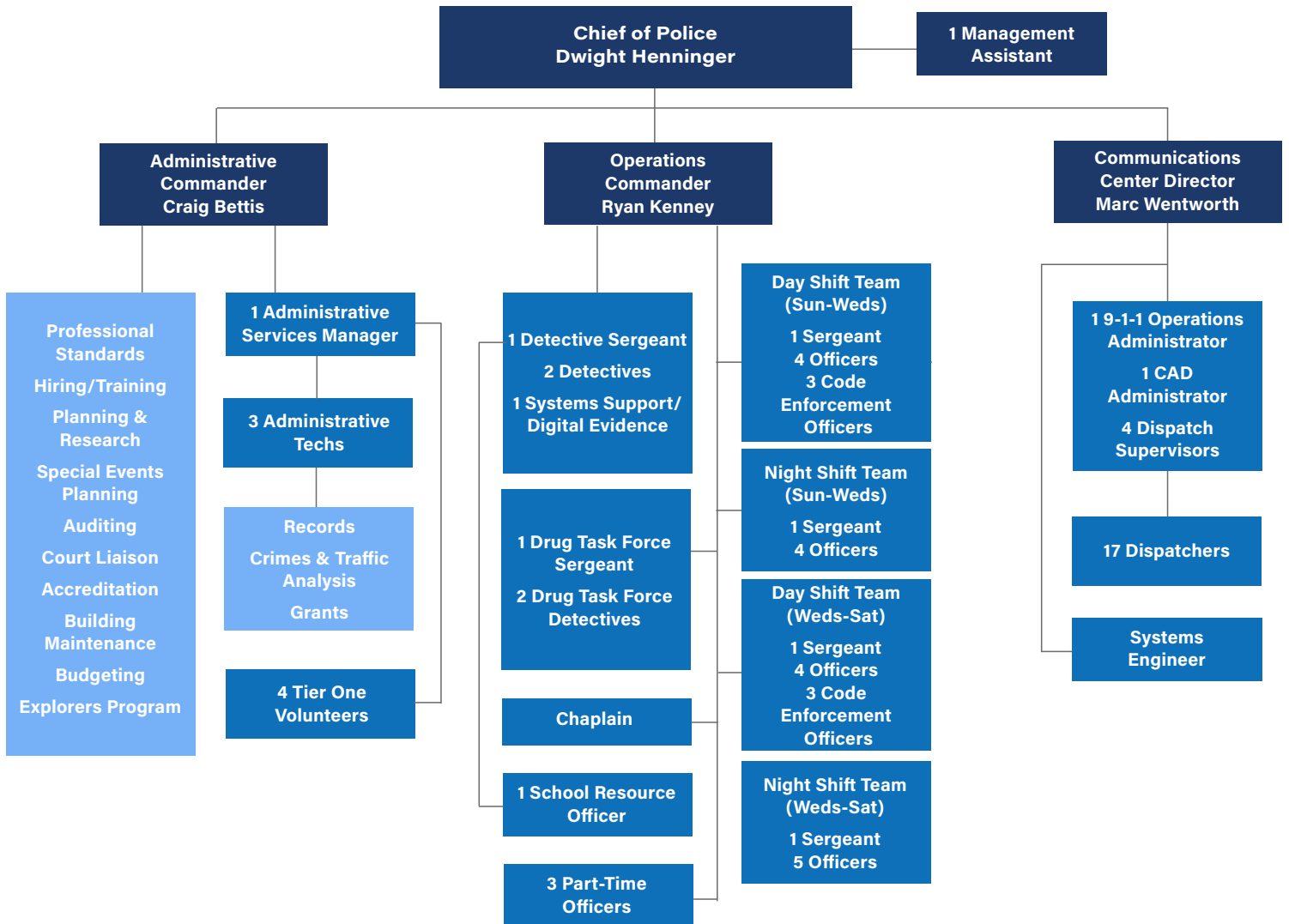
VALUES

Leadership. Be committed, informed and innovative while serving and protecting.

Integrity. Hold myself to the highest ethical standards, be accountable for my actions, and be fair.

Excellence. Continually seek to improve myself, my organization and my community.

Collaboration. Develop relationships and work with colleagues and the community.



PROTECTING AND CONNECTING



VAIL POLICE SERVE AND
PROTECT A COMMUNITY OF

**3.6
MILLION**

VISITORS AND RESIDENTS

A major focus of the Vail Police Department is the public safety coordination of a large influx of recreationalists during summer and winter months and nearly 100 special events in the town annually such as headliner concerts, music and dance festivals, competitive international sport events, parades and more. On days when crowds swell to 80,000 with world-class athletes, media reporters and event spectators, the officer-to-guest ratio is estimated at 1:2700.

To respond effectively during peak periods to critical incidents, dignitary protection and the safety of the traveling public, the Vail Police partner with local, state and federal agencies and with private security companies for extra resiliency.

VAIL POLICE - AT A GLANCE



AUTHORIZED STRENGTH

31 SWORN

Ratio of officer to guest 1:1700
during non-peak periods

35 CIVILIAN

6 Code Enforcement Officers
6 Dispatch Supervisors
17 Dispatchers
1 Evidence Tech
5 Administrative positions



IN 2019

39,541

Calls for Service

89%

Community Satisfaction

BEHIND THE SCENES



NEW RECRUITS
UNDERGO

880
HOURS

OF ONBOARDING &
TRAINING

It takes 30 weeks from the time a Vail Officer is given a conditional employment offer until he/she is on the streets solo. During that time, the new hire will spend two weeks in orientation, 16 weeks in a police academy and 14 weeks in a field training program. In 2019, 5 Field Training Officers helped train 11 new recruits.

Employing individuals who come from diverse backgrounds is a top organization priority at the department and one that demonstrates an adeptness at serving a global community and working in an international resort.

13% of officers are women; 59% of civilians are women; 12% of employees are visible minorities.

SPECIALIZED RESPONSE TEAMS

Members selected for a team come from all ranks of the department.
Collateral duties are served in addition to regular assignments.

Drug Task Force

The Gore Range Narcotics Interdiction Team is a cooperative effort between the Vail Police Department, the Eagle County Sheriff's Office and a Drug Enforcement Administration agent to disrupt established criminal networks and target individuals involved in the illicit drug market.

Special Operations Unit

Highly-trained personnel participate in a countywide special operations unit which include negotiators, snipers, tactical personnel and explosive experts. In September 2019, the SOU, along with Sheriff Deputies, State Troopers, Eagle River Fire and Eagle County Paramedics, responded to a domestic violence/barricade situation where the husband reported his wife was brandishing a gun. The team successfully negotiated the surrender of the female.

Field Training Officers

FTOs run new Vail Police Officers who have graduated from a police academy or who have transitioned from another department through a 14-week training program.

Crime Scene Technicians

CSTs are utilized as a support function in investigations. They are patrol and code enforcement officers specially trained in crime scene collection, forensics science, documentation and photography. In 2019, their services were used on burglaries and death investigations.

Special Events

Teams form prior to each large-scale event. Team Duties include event planning; producing and implementing an incident action plan; and, drafting an after action plan for each event. Incident safety and operational coordination are only a few of the established team responsibilities.

Vail Mountain Patrol

"Going skiing" doesn't always mean going off duty. Officers volunteer on their days off to patrol ski slopes. Their primary role is to support Vail Ski Patrol, Vail Mountain Security and Vail Mountain Safety by helping to enforce skier and snowboarder safety laws and potentially make arrests.



Incident Management Team

The Northwest Colorado IMT is made up of a number of public safety responders from the Vail PD, Vail Public Safety Communications Center, and other public safety agencies throughout Northwest Colorado. The team responds to man-made hazards, natural disasters and large-scale events in support of local jurisdictions.

For 14 years, exercises have included haz-mat scenarios, full-scale flooding, multiple active shooter drills, WMD exercise with the National Guard Civil Support Team, as well as annual tabletop drills with the Vail Fire Department, the Eagle County Paramedic Services, Vail Ski Patrol and Vail Resorts.

In 2019, NWCOIMT exercises included swift water training and hazmat training.



Incident Dispatch Team

Team members travel with and work in the Mobile Communications Unit when the need arises for dispatchers to be in the field during a major event, wildland fires or catastrophe. In 2019, IDTs were deployed 21 times.

Police Volunteer Program

Our VIPS members provide an enormous benefit during the year. In 2019, they contributed more than 650 hours, a \$14,000 savings for the Town. Police volunteers help out with special events, administrative duties, and guest services.

Youth Coalition

A 9-1-1 Dispatcher serves as the Strategy Enforcement Lead for Communities That Care under Mountain Youth. The group is working to close the gap between perception of drug and alcohol use in school.

Outreach Teams

Shop with a Cop is one event we celebrate well. Kids from the Vail and Avon area were paired with officers, deputies and troopers from the Vail and Eagle PDs and the Colorado State Patrol for an excursion to Wal-Mart to select gifts for family members.

School Resource Officer

This position is filled through a school-police cost-sharing arrangement. The SRO is focused on building relationships with the students, school safety and revamping the Vail Mountain School's emergency response plans by working with the educational community and Vail Recreation District for crisis preparedness.



STRATEGIC AIMS

Year 2019 wraps up a multi-year strategic plan.

In 2020, Vail Police is introducing new strategies which focus on high-impact issues such as the mental health crisis, using best policing practices, and working collaboratively.



Building Trust & Legitimacy

Community Outreach & Relationships
Emergency Preparedness
Readiness & Response
Procedural Justice
Fair & Impartial Policing

- Increased visibility by 17% compared to 2018 as measured by total time spent on patrol
- Peak holiday curfews rescinded for the 7th consecutive year due to long-term success of its public safety campaign for crowd control safety
- Emergency preparedness includes wildland fire evacuations, active shooter drills, tabletop drills with first responders and private sector partners
- 4 bilingual employees onboarded in 2018 and 2019
- Collective effort to make contact and build trust with the immigrant community
- Outreach activities includes Shop with a Cop, Special Olympic fundraisers, food drive, coat drive, National Night Out, safety fairs, Officer Down 5k, Ride in Remembrance



Policy & Oversight

Internal Policy Oversight
Live the Mission, Vision, Values
Ideas & Issues Committee
Streamlined Work Processes
After-Action Reports

- Aligned policies and procedures with recommendations in the *21st Century Task Force on Policing Report*
- Created an Internal Policy Oversight Committee
- Recognized notable performance in annual employee appraisals
- Created an Ideas & Issues Committee
- Reviewed operational work processes for relevancies and efficiencies. An e/ticketing-to-records management system interface is nearly complete and will reduce redundancies
- Conducted After-Action Debriefs



Community Policing & Crime Reduction

Road Safety Improvements
Crime Reduction Programs
Volunteers in Police Services



- School Resource Officer position filled through a school-police, cost-sharing arrangement
- VPD and Vail Ski Patrollers hosted a Snow Safety Awareness Night to navigate weather and avalanche resources and encourage appropriate equipment use
- Developed Positive Impact Programs with schools, civic organizations, mental health professionals, victim assistance advocates and public safety partners
- VPD and the State Liquor & Tobacco Enforcement Division compliance checks
- Clearance rate for crimes involving theft, burglary, robbery, aggravated assault, motor vehicle theft and arson reached 24%

Technology & Social Media

Outreach Expansion
Social Media Presence
Proactive Use of Technology
Smart Project Implementations

- Increased social media presence. Twitter grew by 34% and Facebook grew by 24% from 2018.
- CCTV network (cameras) have aided in the detection of crime and apprehension of offenders
- Replaced an outdated virtual briefing portal with a smart tool for internal collaborations and communications and for automation of law enforcement functions
- Created strong project implementation plans

Training & Education

Cost/Benefits Thresholds
 In-Service Training
 Professional Development
 Succession Planning
 Leadership Development
 Mentoring Program
 Hiring & Onboarding
 Change Management

- The Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab (CELL) and the Vail PD have conducted training for over 2,600 citizens since 2015 to recognize and report suspicious activity. The training complements the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING Campaign
- Sustained succession planning and leadership development opportunities implemented
- A Training Coordinator advocates for an employee's professional growth while ensuring staffing levels are not compromised during training-related absences
- Mentoring program is expanding
- An innovative onboarding process is in development
- Our workforce plan includes hiring for diversity



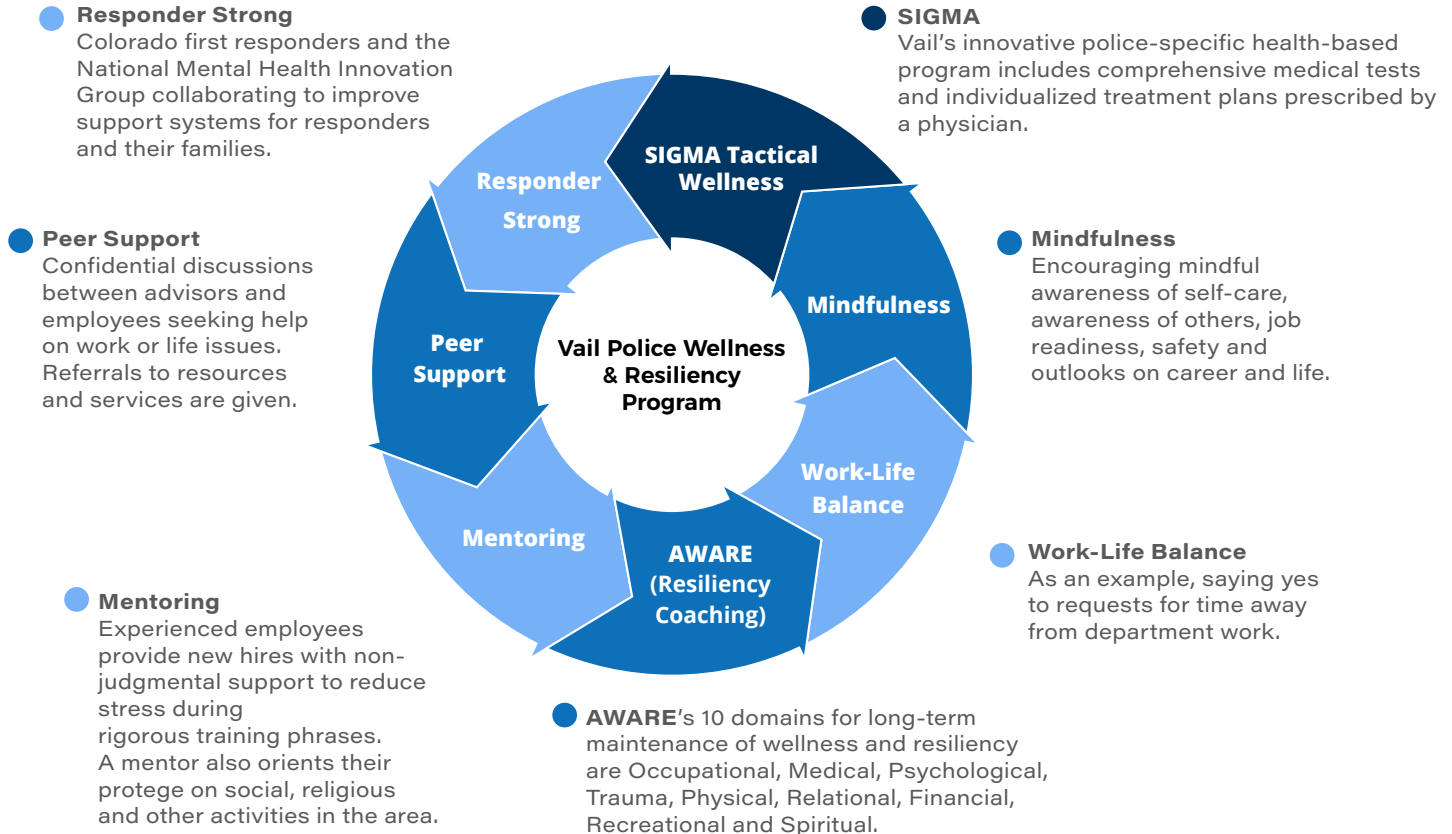
Dispositions of Investigated Complaints

Standards Category	Incidents	Dispositions
Improper Conduct *	6	2 suspensions 1 verbal counseling 1 unfounded 1 exonerated 1 demotion
Traffic Accidents	4	1 verbal counseling
TOTAL	7	
Use of Force Reports		
Use of Force	16	within policy
Wildlife Destruction	4	within policy
TOTAL	22	

* Of the 6 improper conducts, 3 were internally generated and 3 were externally generated.

VAIL POLICE WELLNESS & RESILIENCY PROGRAM

7 complementary realms working together to keep our sworn and civilian personnel resilient and physically, emotionally and mentally healthy.



VOICES & ACTIONS THAT CARRY

Vail Police personnel and their humanitarian efforts are often recognized.

Exemplary Service

Fernando Almanza, a 9-1-1 Dispatcher created the “First Responders: Heroes in the Shadows” educational campaign to help strip the fear the immigrant community has of police and has given the presentation to over 1,100 individuals.



He is also an Eagle County School Board Member, a member of Hearts Reign to promote mental health amongst the immigrant community, and a Strategy Enforcement Lead for Communities That Care under Mountain Youth addressing drug and alcohol use in schools.

He is also a Crisis Hotline Advocate, a certified Mental Health Aid instructor, a Senior Buddy Mentor, a hostage negotiator for SWAT/SOU, an Incident Dispatch Team member, a certified Spanish translator, a Safe Driving Coordinator and an American Sign Language student.

First to Respond, First to Give

Vail Police Chief Henninger asked every employee at the Vail Police Department and the Vail Public Safety Communications Center to make a donation towards the Eagle Valley Behavioral Health fundraising initiative. Chief got 100% participation!

The EVBH supports the Hope Center, the Co-Responder Program and a first responder employee assistance program. They have raised \$19 million

towards their \$190 million goal to support efforts to add counselors in school and the jail, build an online counseling referral system, bring additional mental health providers to the community and a pipeline from University and College Programs to the State.

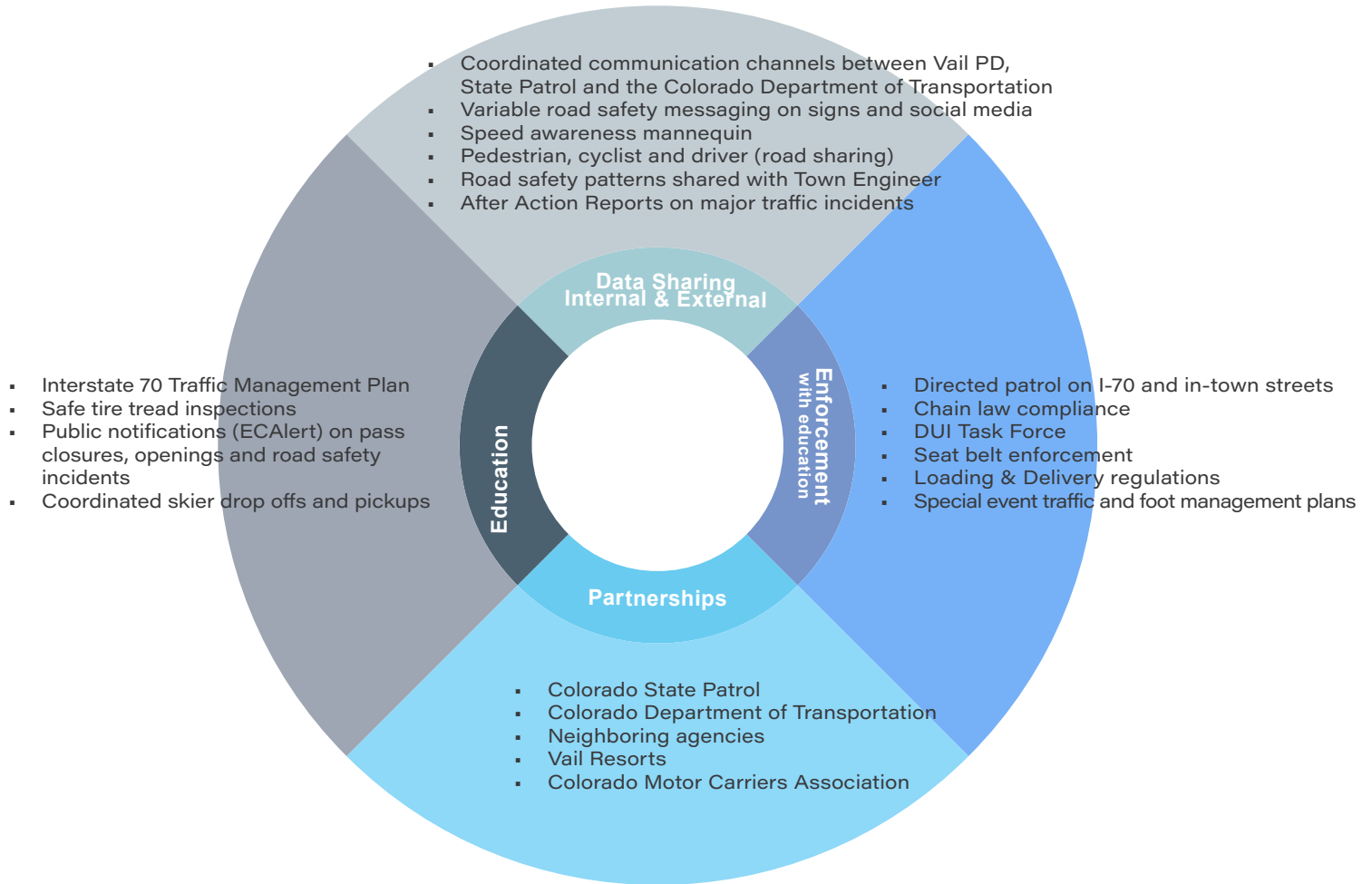
“*This is the most important effort this community has seen to improve the health of the community!*”

- Vail Police Chief Henninger



ROAD & TRAFFIC PARTNERSHIPS

Our flagship programs represent partnerships that help make our initiatives sustainable and successful.



EAGLE COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT IMMIGRANT ALLIANCE (LEIA)

Focuses on strategies for ethnic and race equality and community cohesion in partnership with Catholic Charities.

Outreach Events

Existing outreach programs such as coat drives, food drives, Shop with a Cop and the Explorer Program are integrated into the initiative. Other “get-to-know-you” activities include forums and talks at school because children are important social change agents.

Living in the Valley Resource

Information guide on winter driving, seat belt laws, insurance requirements, the workings of the court system, employment rights including compensation, and on community information such as public transportation, use of libraries, school activities, and more.



Frequently Asked Questions

An FAQ brochure addresses a variety of topics including witnessing and reporting a crime, being a victim, traffic and driving rules and general police adherence to the rule of law.

Volunteer Interpreters Program

Third-party interpreters help with interviews and victim statements. When in a stressful situation or asked to express emotion, people often revert back to their first language.

Working across Differences

Training for officers and the immigrant community in English and Spanish languages around cultural norms, emergency services, immigration laws and cultural differences.

MENTAL HEALTH POWER GRID

VAIL POLICE
WAS AWARDED A GRANT FOR

**\$1.3
MILLION**

TOWARDS ADDITIONAL
MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIANS



The One Mind program was developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Vail PD's One Mind pledge is to sustain partnerships with local mental health organizations and train to be mindful of our interactions with those affected by mental illness.

Eagle Valley Behavioral Health

Vail Police has played a pivotal role in improving the state of behavioral health and substance abuse throughout Vail and Eagle County.

A \$1.3 million grant recently awarded to the Vail Police Department moves ambitions forward by creating a partnership with **Eagle Valley Behavioral Health**, an outreach of Vail Health, on a co-responder model to crisis response, which has police and behavioral health clinicians partner to provide the best care to persons experiencing mental health crises. Funds go towards additional mental health clinicians at the Hope Center.

Eagle Valley Behavioral Health Partners

Vail Police Department
Avon Police Department
Eagle Police Department
Eagle County Sheriff's Office
Bright Future Foundation
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado Mountain Medical
Depression Center, Johnson
Eagle County Government
Eagle County Paramedics Services
Eagle County Schools
Early Childhood Partners
Epic Promise
Hearts Reign
Hope Center
Katz Foundation
Mind Springs Health
MIRA
Mountain Family Care
Mountain Youth
My Future Pathways
Rocky Mountain Health Plans
Speak Up Reach Out
Vail Mind Center
Vail Daily
Vail Health

ADVOCACY

A Vail Police strategy to advocate for the well-being of its community and to advance the police profession through research, legislation, coalitions and volunteerism.

International Association of Chiefs of Police

Vail Police Chief Dwight Henninger was elected the 4th Vice President of the IACP in 2017. He had received the full support of the department, Vail Town officials and staff. Endorsements for his candidacy came from nine past IACP presidents, two past executive directors, the FBI National Academy Alumni, the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives, the Center for Homeland Defense & Security Association, numerous State associations and a large number of police chiefs, commanding officers and public safety professionals.

By earning majority votes at the polls at the 2017 IACP Conference in Philadelphia and, by an established IACP order of succession, Chief Henninger will become IACP President in November 2021.



Vail Police Chief Dwight Henninger, pictured 2nd from the right, is a member of the Commission's Rural & Tribal Working Group.

Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice

President Trump in late October signed an executive order creating the Commission to examine our entire criminal justice system, policing, courts, corrections, victim rights, national security, racial inequalities, police force diversity, juvenile delinquency and more.

An identically named panel was formed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, and led to advances such as the creation of the 9-1-1 emergency call system, the National Crime Information Center, the National Institute of Justice and more.

REPORTED CRIME & ACTIVITY

Persons Crime	3-yr range	3-yr average	2018	2019	% change from average	Notes on 2018 & 2019 data
Homicide	0-5	1	0	0	-	34 yr-old male drove vehicle down pedestrian area, apprehended armed
Sex Offenses	5-9	8	9	9	+13%	Victim intoxication in 5 cases; Victim refused to cooperate in 3 cases
Robbery	0-3	1	1	3	-	1 case involving homeless man taken to Vail Pass and robbed of his cell phone
Assault	37-76	56	54	76	+34%	14 cases involved serious bodily injury
Menacing	6-11	9	6	11	+22%	1 case of a vehicle ramming a truck with 2 people inside
Kidnapping/Imprisonment	1-5	3	1	3	-	1 case involving child abuse; 2 cases involving domestic violence
Threats/Intimidation	1-9	5	6	9	+80%	Bomb threat in 2 cases
Stalking	1-5	3	3	5	+67%	2 cases domestic related; 1 case of a hotel guest stalking a housekeeper
Human Trafficking	0-1	1	0	0	-	Last case of force domestic servitude occurred in 2017
Domestic Violence	38-63	47	63	39	-17%	1 case of female offender spitting multiple times on officer and on spit hood
Child Negligence/Abuse	4-8	6	6	4	-33%	1 case of 6 yr-old girl left on a public patio while parents went skiing
Property Crime						
Arson	0-1	1	0	1	-	Eagle County resident, 22-yr old male, arrested for burning American Flag
Burglary	23-30	27	23	30	+11%	18 residence non-force, 8 non-residence non-force, 1 residence force
Theft	236-398	304	398	236	-22%	Includes 11 felony cybercrimes
Auto Theft	5-18	11	5	11	-	Includes 1 case of taser deployed on I-70 to stop stolen vehicle from Denver
Criminal Extortion	0-2	1	0	2	-	Man attempting to extort \$300,000 for alleged improper massage at a spa
Fraud	78-141	120	78	141	+18%	Scams involving rental property, IRS, online classifieds and ski pass frauds
Forgery	6-10	8	8	6	-25%	Cyber criminals used victims' names on rental lease agreements.
Trespassing	49-96	71	96	49	-31%	1/3 of cases were vehicular trespassings
Vandalism	87-109	100	104	87	-13%	Majority involved intoxicated offenders

REPORTED CRIME & ACTIVITY

Society Crime	3-yr range	3-yr average	2018	2019	% change from average	Notes on 2018 & 2019 data
Drug Offenses	40-122	72	53	40	-44%	Heroin, cocaine, fentanyl, methamphetamine, marijuana
Impaired Driving	30-49	42	30	47	-4%	Majority impaired by alcohol
Weapon Violations	2-5	4	3	3	-25%	Most serious case involved violent threats to law enforcement and citizens
Liquor Law Violations	22-55	37	35	22	-41%	Underage drinking in half of the cases
Indecent Exposure	2-4	3	4	2	-33%	1 case of indecent photos sent via text; 1 case of intimate activity in public
Prowler	1-3	2	3	3	+50%	1 man seen through doorbell app; 2 cases of men shining flashlights into home
Resisting/Obstructing Officers	10-18	13	10	10	-23%	Typically resulted from contact for another purpose
Disorderly Conduct	44-55	49	44	49	-	Most occurring at bars; 2nd top location is in parking structures
Public Drunkenness	116-179	139	124	116	-17%	Custodial holds to prevent dangers to themselves/others

Quality of Life

Harassment	77-96	85	77	96	+13%	Majority of cases involving roommates, former girl/boyfriends and spouses
Noise Complaints	190-201	196	201	190	-3%	Majority are loud party noise complaints
Animal Complaints	261-385	316	303	385	+22%	140 cases involving domestic animals, 218 wildlife, 7 livestock, 9 bites
Code Violations	549-1,029	774	549	1,029	+33%	Education efforts precede enforcement actions
Suspicious Activity	673-747	701	673	682	-3%	An informed community helps to report suspicious activity
Civil Standbys	146-185	166	168	185	+11%	Roommate disputes, evictions, child custody exchanges
Welfare Checks	81-106	94	96	106	+13%	Mainly persons making concerning remarks to family
Missing/Overdue Persons	59-78	66	62	59	-11%	Overdue individuals and separated family members
Runaways	1-4	2	1	1	-50%	6 yr-old male ran away from school and found
Suicidal Calls	50-92	67	92	60	-10%	VPD partnering with Eagle Valley Behavioral Health Center to combat this crisis
Wildlife Calls	55-218	123	95	218	+77%	Presence of bighorn sheep on roadways; increase of moose and bear calls
Bar Checks	502-921	678	611	921	+36%	Officers look for underaged persons and intoxicated persons
Home/Business Checks	319-472	390	319	472	+21%	Exterior property checked when vacant for extended periods

Parking Issues

Parking Problems	3,349-3,777	3,606	3,691	3,777	+4.7%	Vail continues to work towards expanding parking options
Parking Tickets	3,996-4,461	4,159	4,021	4,461	+7.3%	Includes 2,608 warnings in 2019
Abandoned Vehicles	48-79	63	48	61	-	Includes 14 vehicles abandoned on the Interstate 70 and its ramps



CO-RESPONDER RESPONSE

IN 2019 VAIL
POLICE RECEIVED

68 CALLS

INVOLVING A MENTAL
HEALTH CRISIS

Optimal Police Response

Mental health crises have increased across the country for the past several years. Identifying and responding to mental health calls have become a top priority in Eagle County. The Vail Police Department has partnered with The Hope Center and Eagle County Paramedics Service to develop a co-response model and address any services a patient might need. The goal of the co-responder program is to connect patients with the proper care they need to get well. In the first year since implementation, emergency department visits decreased by 74% and mental health holds decreased by 64%.

Let's Be Blunt

Colorado's Amendment 64 is cool, but only if you know the rule!

Let's Be Blunt, a media campaign rolled out in 2019, is re-establishing the Town of Vail as a municipality that neither advocates nor discourages the consumption of marijuana but strictly enforces the laws of Colorado Amendment 64 and responsible use. The campaign is using quirky taglines and creative visuals to drive awareness of the rules for marijuana use and clarify misconceptions.



Vail Police and Eagle County Sheriff's Office, as campaign partners, address trends such as the fast growth of retail marijuana businesses in neighboring communities, the persistent use of marijuana in public areas, marijuana products haphazardly left behind in hotel rooms, con-

sumption of marijuana on National Forest Lands, transporting and mailing marijuana out-of-state, and a rise in negative health incidences related to marijuana use and the alarming THC potency.

Funding for the project came from a Marijuana Impact Grant awarded to the Vail Police Department by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. To help construct **Let's Be Blunt**, Vail Police hired Buie & Co., a public relations and government affairs firm that has an award-winning history of creating public education campaigns.



“

We care for all of our residents and visitors and want them to be safe. Our hope is that this campaign will keep everyone informed and educated to practice responsible and legal consumption.”

— Vail Police Chief Dwight Henninger





TRAFFIC & ROAD SAFETY

Motor Vehicle Accidents

442 in 2019
389 in 2018

Traffic Stops

2,413 in 2019
1,735 in 2018

Traffic Citations

824 in 2019
754 in 2018

Traffic Warnings

1,387 in 2019
925 in 2018

Traffic Control

384 in 2019
316 in 2018



CHAIN LAW ENFORCEMENT

83 days in 2019

66 days in 2018

**On a single day in
November, 317 commercial
vehicles were stopped for
chain law compliance checks.
Eight were cited.**

In 2019

22%

Percentage of motor vehicle accidents on Interstate 70 in Vail.

38,000

Average daily traffic volume of vehicles on Interstate 70, per Colorado Department of Transportation.

79

Eastbound Interstate Pass Closures

99

Westbound Interstate Pass Closures



Vail Traffic & Road Safety Program

With Vail's immediate proximity to Vail Pass, a 10,666-foot-high mountain pass in the Rocky Mountains of central Colorado, the VPD continues to focus on high visibility, collaboration with the Colorado State Patrol, the Colorado Department of Transportation, aggressive chain law enforcement, a DUI Task Force, and messaging to educate the

motoring public on responsible driving. To also ensure interstate commerce does not come to a standstill and adversely impact residential and business areas, the Vail PD also works with the Colorado Motor Carriers Association and neighboring agencies on pass closures, staged closures and phased re-openings.



VAIL POLICE SPECIAL EVENT PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

After months, and sometimes years of preparation, there is always great anticipation and a sense of readiness within the department to help welcome a special event and to coordinate public safety and critical infrastructure protection. Developing strong working relationships with event producers, promoters

and private entities help secure the return of events each year. Three of the busiest events in 2019 were the GoPro Mountain Games at +/- 80,000 people, Vail Farmers market at + 20,000 per weekend and Vail America days at approximately 30,000 people for the parade.

Major Cases

RUSH HOUR

Truth can be stranger than fiction or in this case to a scene straight out of an action movie.

What began as a report of a stolen truck from Denver would escalate to absurd levels once the vehicle was located parked here in Vail. Upon contacting the driver, and discovering he was not alone but in the company of another adult and five children, Vail officers attempted to ask the driver for his identification and to exit the vehicle which the driver refused. Upon asking the driver if he was aware the vehicle he was driving was reported stolen the driver put the vehicle into drive and began to race off. The driver didn't get too far in the truck however, as he quickly veered off the road and into a snowbank, crashing through a Town of Vail fence in the process.

This wasn't the end of the chase however, as the driver promptly exited the vehicle, leaving his passengers behind, and fled on foot onto I-70. After securing the vehicle and the passengers within officers made chase, avoiding I-70 traffic; a feat that's quite difficult in a car let alone on foot. With deft feet and the assistance of some helpful civilians, Vail officers were able to catch up to the driver and stop his reckless escape attempt, safely making the arrest. While we will freely admit to indulging in action movies regularly, hopefully this case will serve as a reminder to keep any and all action stunts on the mountain and off the interstate.

FLIP FLOPS AND COP STOPS

At the VPD it is an unfortunate truth that we run into a large number of DUI cases.

Our officers hear a wide array of excuses when speaking with a drunk driver, however even knowing this there are still a few interesting exceptions, this case being one of them. The driver in question, who had failed his roadside tests, refused to do a breath test stating "I did my best here," and that he "tried to make the gauntlet and did not make it."

After being placed under arrest and asking if the officer could let him walk away from this, the man stated, "I'm thinking the way to get out of this is deny everything and allow my lawyer to deal with it." The officer then confirmed with the man that he was indeed denying everything. Unfortunately for the driver, he couldn't deny the fact that he had an open alcohol container in the front of his car, nor that he had a previous DUI conviction.

PUT IT ON HIS TAB

There are plenty of obvious signs, that make themselves plenty apparent, that would lead to the conclusion that a person is bad.

For the offender in this case, we would say these signs are not only obvious but also quite numerous. Upon responding to a call from the 10th Mountain Whiskey bar, Vail officers soon learned that the offender in question had begun his string of bad choices by leaving the bar without paying his tab whilst also attempting to steal a 10th Mountain hat. Upon contacting the offender he defended his actions stating that he “does not bring his credit cards or money out when he drinks so he does not spend too much money,” and that “if he brings his credit card with him to the bar he could end up spending \$300.” As Vail officers began to work out a solution to the issue of payment, the man began to become belligerent, yelling profanities at the officer attempting to contact the offender’s wife in order to settle the offender’s tab.

As the offender continued to escalate the situation, his language and demeanor becoming more confrontational as the officers on the scene attempted to calm the offender, it was decided that for their own safety, and that of the civilians around them, the offender was to be put under arrest. As one might presume from the offender’s previous actions, this only caused the offender to lash out more; not only attempting to take a swing at the officers, but also resisting arrest, kicking at the officers, and spitting on and making racist remarks on one of the officer’s racial heritage.

At the end of this entire story the offender was charged, found guilty, sentenced to 30 days in jail, and was fined \$3,289. His original bar tab? \$89. If there’s any lesson to be learned from this, and the many, many mistakes the offender made, we think it would be: try to be a better, kinder person than the offender. Trust us, in this case the bar has been set very low.

WANT TO RIDE THEIR BICYCLES

Being a resort town, and one focused on the enjoyment of outdoor activities, it’s no surprise that there tend to be many crimes, thefts, specifically, that involve sports equipment.

That being said the theft of a mountain bike from a storefront by literally riding off with it is still a bit ridiculous. While this theft attempt was successful at first with the offender getting out of view, it was not long before an employee found the bike, missing its wheels, in the back of a nearby pickup truck. Removing the bike frame, whilst snapping a photo of the truck for good measure, it didn’t take Vail officers long to put the pieces together. Collecting security camera footage and the vehicle’s registration information identified the offender who, by the time officers had responded, had already fled the scene.

This wouldn’t be the offender’s last crime, however, as before his arrest the man returned to the scene of the crime once more. Two days later the same storefront was struck with another theft, though this time was a little more destructive. The window to a display-case was found shattered inward by two rocks and this time not only was a bike stolen but two helmets as well. Security camera footage confirmed it was the now-repeat offender showing the same truck now with its bed filled with bikes.

It turns out the offender had been busy over the last few days. The bikes in his truck-bed matched the descriptions of a slew of other thefts reported that same day or the day before. After obtaining a warrant for the offender’s arrest and locating the offender’s location, Denver officers made the arrest. Using the offender’s cellular phone location data, investigators were able to pin the offender to the locations and times of the crimes. At the time of writing the offender is yet to be tried in a court of law, however it’s safe to say he won’t be simply riding off and away from the charges.

HERE'S TO A GREAT YEAR!







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