

**Report on the Response of the  
Department of State Police to the Impact of the  
Aging of Virginia's Population**



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Department of State Police  
November 14, 2014  
Page 2 of 14

Pursuant to Code of Virginia § § 2.2-5510 and 51.5-136, the Department of State Police submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The aging of the Baby Boom generation will create new and unique challenges for federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States over the next several years. By 2030, when the entire Baby Boom generation is between the ages of 66 and 84, the continued delivery of quality law enforcement services will require subtle but significant enhancements to existing policies and procedures to better serve this group. The Department of State Police, like other law enforcement agencies, is actively reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure that the agency is prepared for this significant change in the community we serve.

From 2000 to 2013, the number of Virginians 65 years and older increased to approximately 13.4 percent of the population, and there are currently 1.5 million adults in Virginia over 60 years of age. As this percentage of the population continues to increase, the number of crimes targeting this age group and the number of their encounters with the law enforcement community should also increase proportionally. The physical changes associated with aging may also impact the ability of older drivers to safely operate motor vehicles, and this creates further challenges for the law enforcement community in ensuring the safety of Virginia highways.

The Department of State Police provides crime prevention, personal safety, and traffic safety courses designed for our senior citizens that are conducted by trained crime prevention specialists assigned to division and area offices throughout Virginia. These courses are conducted in a variety of settings at the request of the public. The crime prevention specialists have brochures and hand-outs designed to reinforce the program messages and contain material that is intended to help our aging population make effective personal safety decisions. In addition, the Protect and Respect Intergenerational Mentoring Program was launched in May of 2003. It was created to strengthen Virginia's focus on crime prevention, to reduce elder abuse and victimization, to help eliminate financial fraud and scams targeting seniors, to promote fire safety and teach effective emergency responses, and to provide needed resources to improve the overall quality of life for seniors. Covering more than 30 topics in all, these courses are bundled according to regional and local needs to form customized training programs that serve to address the crime prevention needs and safety concerns in each community. The Department of State Police will continue to actively provide appropriate programs to senior groups throughout Virginia to help this segment of our population better interact with the law enforcement community and enhance their safety over the next several years.

The Virginia "Senior Alert" (VSA) Plan, created by legislation in the 2007 Session of the Virginia General Assembly, provides an additional valuable tool for Virginia law enforcement agencies to help locate missing "senior adults," while allowing the broadcasters of Virginia an opportunity to contribute to the communities they serve. Virginia's "Senior Alert" Plan assists in recovering missing senior adults who may be in great danger. This plan is available for use by all Virginia law enforcement agencies and can be used as their primary "Senior Alert" Plan or as a supplement to a regional plan. In 2013, the department received 13 requests for Senior Alerts,

and six alerts were issued. In the remaining cases, the missing senior was located prior to the activation or the case did not meet the established criteria for activation.

The department has also taken steps to ensure our employees are thoroughly trained in effectively dealing with citizens with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia associated with aging by providing specific training from health care professionals and support personnel trained in this topic. The training was specifically targeted towards helping employees to recognize the behavior and indicators of exhibited by individuals suffering from Alzheimer's disease or dementia, and has helped our sworn employees to better recognize the unique indicators of these conditions. In the future, the Department of State Police may solicit input from the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services to further enhance its training programs in this area and others as specific needs are addressed.

This document is responsive to the requested topics relating to the provision of services to Virginia's aging population, and provides a summary of our planned or current activities targeted to ensure the continued quality of the law enforcement services we provide. It is impossible to fully identify all of the service that may potentially be impacted by the aging of Virginia's population, but the Department of State Police continues to remain committed to providing the best service possible to the all of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this request and for the consideration of the services provided by the Department of State Police to Virginia's aging population in your comprehensive study.

### AGENCY DESCRIPTION

The Department of State Police has more than 2,700 full-time sworn and civilian employees that provide comprehensive and high quality statewide law enforcement services to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia and our visitors. The department is independent yet supportive of other law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, and actively plans, trains and promotes emergency preparedness to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth and its infrastructure. The statutory authority for the Department of State Police is established in Title 52 of the Code of Virginia.

The Department of State Police is a nationally accredited law enforcement agency recognized by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), Inc. The department received its initial accreditation in 1986, and was the second state law enforcement agency in the nation to receive such a prestigious recognition. Since then, the department has continually maintained its accredited status through CALEA.

The approximately 2,000 sworn law enforcement officers working for the department perform a variety of law enforcement services on a daily basis ranging from motor vehicle enforcement to the investigation of complex and violent criminal activity.

In 2013, Virginia State Troopers assigned to patrol activities:

- Worked a total of 270,051 staff days patrolling 32,449,786 miles of highway.
- Responded to approximately 1.24 million incidents.
- Investigated 34,042 vehicle crashes.
- Assisted 178,635 stranded or otherwise distressed motorists.
- Responded to 31,268 requests for assistance from sheriffs' departments, 18,806 requests from police departments and 7,473 requests from other local, state and federal agencies.
- Issued 630,149 traffic summonses and/or arrests, including 185,854 speeding, 68,872 reckless driving and 5,071 for driving under the influence.
- Made a total of 20,633 criminal arrests.
- Made a total of 2,923 drug/narcotics arrests.
- Seized drugs and narcotics at an estimated street value of \$359,743.
- Performed 31,934 in-depth safety inspections of heavy commercial vehicles and placed 9,308 or 29 percent of these vehicles out of service.
- Made 3,187 crime prevention presentations to 152,008 citizens.
- Conducted 189 CPTED assessments on businesses and on homes.
- Committed 4,289 man-hours to crime prevention programs and safety seminars.
- Troopers achieved a 92% conviction rate for adjudicated cases.
- Seized 99 illegal weapons.
- Provided Med-Flight services across the state and flew 2,528 hours responding to 2,418 flight requests.

Sworn employees assigned to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation conducted numerous criminal investigations of violent crime, narcotics violations, computer crimes, auto theft, insurance fraud, and a variety of other illegal activities with a focus on serious crimes and organized criminal offenses taking place in multiple jurisdictions. Many of the investigations were conducted independently, but they were sometimes conducted jointly in partnership with federal or local law enforcement agencies.

The employees of the Bureau of Administrative and Support Services provide the primary administrative support for the department including managing important programs like the Virginia Criminal Information Network, the Sex Offender Registry, and the Firearms Transaction Center. In addition, this bureau also ensures the delivery of human resource, training, communications, information technology, and other logistical services through the department's six administrative divisions in support of our law enforcement mission.

Preliminary statistics for 2014 indicate similar performance levels and requests for service.

## REQUESTED INFORMATION

1. **If your agency has undertaken any actions to respond to the current and future impact of an aging population, such as needs assessments, strategic planning, or use of best practices, please briefly describe those actions. Please indicate what assistance from DARS could help your agency as it prepares to serve an aging Virginia population.**

As stated in the Executive Summary, the aging of the Baby Boom generation will create new and unique challenges for federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States over the next several years. The Department of State Police, like other law enforcement agencies, is actively reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure that the agency is prepared for this significant change in the community we serve. This factor is recognized as an element of the department's strategic planning process, but the department's delivery of quality law enforcement services remains focused on our service to the entire population of the state. No assistance is immediately necessary from DARS, but this may change in the future as the needs of our aging population are more readily identified.

2. **Briefly describe your agency's services that are used primarily by older Virginians and the funding streams (types and amounts) that support those services. If these particular services or funding streams are provided in conjunction with other state or local agencies or other for profit or non-profit organizations, please list them.**

We do not have any specific appropriations or grants to provide such programs or services.

3. **Identify current agency programs specifically designed to serve older Virginians that fall into any of the following eight categories:**

### **Health Care/Wellness**

The Health and Wellness services provided internally for our workforce are for sworn employees to ensure their continued ability to physically carry out their duties. Sworn employees receive classes on Health Maintenance and have their blood drawn for testing every two years. This blood work has detected many medical conditions, allowing for early treatment and better control of the conditions. There is a Weight Control Program to encourage sworn employees to maintain a weight that puts them at a lower risk of many chronic diseases and improves their overall health, longevity, and ability to perform their duties.

All state employees receive free wellness checks, if enrolled in a state health insurance program, and all enrolled employees have access to MyActiveHealth to manage their health and wellness. The department actively encourages employees to participate in these programs.

### **Education**

The Training Division focuses solely on training internally for our sworn employees who respond to scenarios where the elderly may be involved or are victims of crimes; however, we do not conduct external training for citizens. The department provides training on topics such as working with the deaf and hard of hearing and working with Alzheimer's Patients. Both courses span one hour time frames individually. We also provide a course online and in the classroom on dealing with mental illness. Several years ago VSP joined other agencies to support programs and training on many topics involving Senior Citizens, such as Seniors and Law Enforcement Together (SALT) and TRIAD. TRIAD is a three-way commitment among the chief of police, sheriff and older or retired leaders in a city, county or town. They agree to work together to reduce the criminal victimization of the elderly and enhance the delivery of law enforcement services to older persons.

### **Public Safety (including Adult Abuse Prevention)**

The Department of State Police does not have any programs that are specifically designed for older Virginians, as we enforce the laws of the Commonwealth without regard to age, political affiliation, race or sexual orientation. We have, in the past, conducted investigations into crimes that tended to affect older Virginians more than younger Virginians. These investigations included:

1. Forgery and Embezzlement as they relate to estates, wills and powers of attorney.
2. Fraud, Assault and Abuse as they relate to elder care in nursing homes.
3. Fraud as it relates to online, phone and in person scams.

Additionally, the Virginia Fusion Center is the conduit for the statewide sharing of information to law enforcement as it relates to Missing Persons. Lastly, the department has a Search and Rescue Unit, an Aviation Unit and a large cadre of specially trained personnel to conduct ground searches for missing persons, who are at times elderly and/or suffering from dementia.

All public safety programs maintained and conducted by the Department of State Police are for all segments, classifications and groups within the population of the Commonwealth. Sworn personnel with the state police have received Virginia Crisis Intervention Training (VACIT) to bring together local stakeholders, including law enforcement officers, emergency dispatchers, mental health treatment providers, consumers of mental health services and others (such as hospitals, emergency medical care facilities, non-law enforcement first responders, and family advocates), in order to improve multi-systems' response to persons experiencing behavioral health crises who come into contact with law enforcement first responders.

With regards to aging licensed drivers, troopers make referrals to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for medical review and driver skill evaluation any driver encountered during a traffic stop or as the result of a vehicle crash that may not exhibit the cognitive ability to respond

to questions, or demonstrate the physical motor capability to safely operate a motor vehicle on the highway.

### **Recreation**

The Department of State Police does not provide services in this area.

### **Housing**

The Department of State Police does not provide services in this area.

### **Accessibility (including Livable Communities <http://www.vadrs.org/vblc/>)**

1. The department addresses most of the accessibility to service and facilities as an element of our responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In the "aging workforce" area department policy identifies annual physicals & surveys that allow for more thorough evaluations from older members of the workforce, and reasonable accommodations are considered if necessary and requested.
2. In a broader application of our department guidelines, work schedules, return to work, and fitness for duty policies, and access to services are positively affected by the application these policies/procedures.
3. The application of the policy regarding missing persons (Adult) enhances services directly affecting the aging population using programs such as Senior Alerts.
4. In a broad application of handling individuals with mental illness or disability and community relations, these services are positively affected for the aging population (such as security assessments provided to retirement homes).

### **Financial Security**

Protecting Virginia citizenry and providing resources for their financial security is an on-going function of the Department of State Police through public meetings and discussions and through the VSP crime prevention program. Efforts to educate include presentations focused on personal safety, workplace violence prevention, and personal information associated crimes. All training is part of an intensified crime prevention curriculum certified through the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

### **Transportation**

In 2013, approximately 152,008 citizens of Virginia and visitors were introduced to 3,187 various crime prevention and safety programs. These programs allowed distribution of nearly 23,914 informational handouts and brochures. Crime Prevention troopers conducted 307 crime prevention programs and 827 Traffic Safety Programs. In addition, 181 programs were conducted to address personal safety, 32 addressed the issues of road rage, 17 workplace

violence workshops were held, and 9 programs were sponsored on recognizing and preventing fraud, schemes and scams. Crime Prevention troopers also conducted security assessments on 189 businesses and residences.

**4. Is your agency able to meet all of the service demands of older Virginians for the services listed above? If there are any instances where the demand for services exceeds your agency's ability to meet the demand, please indicate the service and the extent of the unmet demand. Also, if your agency maintains waiting lists for services, please provide this information, including the waiting list numbers for each service.**

The current demands for law enforcement services placed upon the Department of State Police as related to older Virginians is currently being met with the resources available. This office does receive and deliver demands for security assessments on retirement homes, nursing homes, etc, when requested. We also, have provided safety talks specifically for senior citizens. The demand for these services is small and very manageable.

**5. Provide the number of persons, by gender if available, who received services from the agency in each of the past five state fiscal years (FY 2010 through FY2014) who fell into the following age ranges: 60-64; 65-74; 75-84; and 85 and older. If your agency lacks specific information about the numbers of older Virginians it serves but has other evidence indicating that it is serving more or fewer older Virginians than it has in the past, please describe the basis for that estimation.**

Currently the Department of State Police does not keep specific data regarding the services provided exclusively to older Virginians. The majority of criminal investigative information is not focused on the age of the victim or offender, unless required by statute, and the existing databases utilized by the department do not permit searches of this kind. At this time there is no data to suggest an increase in the amount of criminal activity involving older Virginians.

**6. Referring to the services or funding you described in item two describe any services or funding provided to older Virginians for which the accessibility or availability varies considerably in different parts of the Commonwealth.**

There are no specific services provided that would be responsive to this question. In addition, the department is provided no special funding for this purpose.

**7. Over the next five to 10 years, in what ways do you anticipate that an aging population will impact your agency's services, funding streams, or policies? Consider the impact from an increase in the number of older Virginians and whether the needs of older Virginians will differ from those of today's older adults. Please include any anticipated impacts upon the cost of services, changes in type of services or the manner of service delivery, or modifications to agency policies, staffing needs, or procedures.**

Considering data that indicates a growing and aging population, there is no indication that the Department of State Police's ability to perform its core responsibilities and deliver professional law enforcement services to all citizens and visitors within the Commonwealth will be significantly impacted. Currently, the service demands on our agency are not constant; they change frequently and are often in response to criminal activity. We have no data that suggests that this will change in the future, and the manner in which services are provided will be modified to best serve the citizens at that time. It is reasonable to assume that there will be an increase in requests for security assessments and safety presentations from the members of this age group; however, we do not anticipate a significant impact on the agency's budget or policies.

**8. Please describe the primary steps that should be taken at the federal, state, or local levels to meet the future demands of older Virginians and to make services delivery more effective and efficient.**

The State Police maintains a scientifically applied staffing formula that ensures that the number of troopers available to respond to calls for service remains proportionate to the general service population of the Commonwealth within established time intervals. Adequate state funding is essential to the agency to ensure enforcement staffing levels are sustained and response times maintained has the social dynamics and the number of the state's population transforms in the coming decade.

At this time we anticipate no significant operational or organizational changes to meet future demands for services to our older citizens, but it is recognized that more in-depth studies will be necessary to determine how aging population densities may relate to the increase in service needs to particular areas of the state and to identify more direct services that will be important to this group.

It is important to note that the department has experienced significant reductions in our general fund operating budget for more than the past ten years. The impact of these consistent budget cuts and lack of available funding for new programs, coupled with the lack of increases in staffing to correspond with the growth in the population of Virginia, has significantly limited the department's ability to expand services in new areas. The department is focused on providing the best quality law enforcement services to all Virginia residents, and all available resources are directed towards these core agency functions.

Should it prove necessary to significantly modify the method of delivery of services by the department based on our aging population, additional funding would be required to effectively implement these changes.

**9. Identify the extent to which your agency provides "customer-oriented" publications and websites that are designed to be "senior-friendly." If the information you currently provide is not readily accessible to older Virginians, please identify any steps your agency is taking to improve their access to this information.**

The Virginia State Police Public Relations Office (PRO) coordinates the department's outreach to all Virginia residents, and a multi-media approach is used to reach the various populations within the Commonwealth.

The strategies in this multi-media approach include:

- (1) **Virginia State Police Facebook Page** –In March 2010, the department launched an official Facebook page. Since then, the site has gained more than 78,470 “fans” following our daily posts related to traffic safety, criminal investigations, recruitment and hiring opportunities, special personnel recognitions, traffic advisories, and various department-related events. Women account for 56 percent of those followers with 13 percent of them between the ages of 45-54; 7 percent between 55-64, and 3 percent 65 and older. Among males, 8 percent of our followers are between the ages of 45-54; 4 percent between ages 55-64; and 2 percent are 65 and older. Worth noting is that these percentages exceed the percentages of all Facebook users worldwide, so the department has garnered an impressive following among the more senior populations. The PRO uses this to our advantage by focusing on senior-related messaging and posts – everything from driver safety to scam prevention. These more senior populations are also very active with commenting on posts provided by the department.
- (2) **TRIAD/SALT** – Numerous troopers are members of TRIAD and Seniors and Law enforcement Together (SALT) councils across the Commonwealth and routinely work with members to promote traffic safety and crime prevention efforts. Troopers also routinely conduct presentations for these senior groups and similar organizations providing valuable crime prevention and personal safety information for members of this age group. The PRO helps provide these troopers with relevant brochures and multi-media presentations for such audiences to further educate seniors on how to protect themselves from victimized in a crime or scam.
- (3) **Marketing Materials** - The PRO specifically seeks out handouts, videos, and other marketing materials to supply our sworn and civilian personnel for safety presentations to various community groups. The PRO also makes such materials available to the public by putting them out on display at headquarters and area offices statewide.
- (4) **Website** – All videos featured on the department website are closed-captioned for the benefit of those with hearing difficulties. In addition, the font and size used on the website were specifically selected to aid the visually-impaired.
- (5) **VSP Newsletter** – This quarterly publication is done in-house by the PRO for all active and retired members. The newsletter is always in great demand among our retirees as it is a means for them to stay connected with the department and its

personnel. The newsletter even features a special section that highlights a retiree or retiree-related events, as well as lists all sworn and civilian retiree deaths – to include the individuals' titles and years of service with the department.

- (6) **Media Releases** – The PRO drafts and distributes press releases on traffic safety and/or crime prevention as it relates to senior populations. The purpose of these releases is to generate media coverage and help us get critical messaging to the public.
- (7) **Virginia State Police Alumni, Inc.** – The PRO has helped coordinate several major gatherings for the Virginia State Police Alumni, Inc., which is a gathering of retired and former, sworn and civilian department personnel. From putting together PowerPoint presentations of old photographs, to assisting with the event planning and coordination, to taking photos of the event for the Alumni and department publications, the PRO plays an integral role in working with this group.
- (8) **Retiree & Spouse Certificates** – The PRO assists the Personnel Division in preparing all certificates presented to retirees and their spouses. These certificates thank and recognize our retiring employees and their spouses for their many years of dedicated service to the department and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- (9) **State Fair of Virginia** – In past years the PRO has created an exhibit for the State Fair of Virginia that highlights the department's activities and resources. This year the department did not have a booth at the fair, but previously the troopers assigned to the booth routinely interacted with older guests at the event during the course of the 11-day fair. The PRO also provided literature that was targeted towards addressing traffic safety and crime prevention topics for older citizens.
- (10) **Special Projects** – Over the years, the PRO has taken the lead on various projects and events that highlight our retired and former members and their many contributions to VSP in the course of their duties. These projects include the *80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Yearbook*, the department's *75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration*, *Driver Training Track Dedication and Ribbon-Cutting*, and *the Grand Opening Celebration for the VSP Administrative Headquarters and Virginia Emergency Operations Center*. The committees established to plan, prepare and host these events always include volunteer sworn and civilian retirees as contributing members. The department takes great pride in its history and progress over the years, and we greatly value the input and historical perspective our retirees provide with such projects and events.

**10. Describe any other services or programs that your agency plans to implement in the future to address the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.**

There are no immediate, or future plans regarding the development of new programs specifically intended and created to meet the needs of aging Virginians other than those previously discussed. In the department's current budgetary situation, our goal is to maintain existing services for all Virginians, both older and younger alike. Current fiscal constraints limit the ability of the agency to provide services beyond the current programs available and the duties and responsibilities supported within the core mission of the agency.

**11. Please indicate if your agency is experiencing an increase in employees retiring later and describe any actions your agency is taking or plans to take to accommodate its aging workforce with innovative practices.**

The department is not experiencing an increase in our employees retiring later than they had previously at this time. Currently, 438 employees are eligible for retirement. In 2011, 59 employees retired, in 2012, 66 employees retired and in 2013, 60 employees retired. 70 employees have retired effective January 1, 2014 until present.