

# Ohio State Highway Patrol

## Monthly Commander's Column



### Traffic Safety, Criminal Patrol, and Accountability keys to Patrol community service

On behalf of the members of your local Highway Patrol post, we are proud that our efforts have made our area safer for its citizens, and for those who visit the area on leisure or business, as well as for enhancing the quality of life in our local communities to allow businesses to succeed even during the recent difficult economic times.

In the beginning of 2008, we implemented a new organizational philosophy that built upon our previous successes and termed it Lifestat: The 24/7 Initiative. The 24/7 Initiative was meant to provide a more holistic view of the efforts, challenges and accomplishments of the Division for every hour of every day.

The program was founded on three principals that focused on Traffic Safety, Criminal Patrol, and Accountability. As we look back and review year one of this mission, it appears that we have made great strides in each of these areas.

#### **Traffic Safety**

The number of traffic fatalities declined from the previous historic low of 1,239 in 2006 to 1,191 in 2008. This marked the first time that annual traffic fatalities have fallen below 1,200 in Ohio.

While the continued decline of the number of vehicle miles traveled in the state played a role in these reductions, the traffic fatality rate of 1.10 marked the lowest level in Ohio history and remained considerably lower than the national average of 1.27.

This suggests that some of our new traffic safety initiatives like the Metropolitan and Saturation Operations, played a crucial role in assuring that Ohio's roads remain among the safest in the nation.

#### **Criminal Patrol**

State troopers seized over 5.2 million grams of illegal narcotics valued at over \$47.5 million last year. This was a 55 percent increase in drug seizures by grams from 2007 levels.

Through effective traffic enforcement we are able to interdict both large and small shipments of illegal narcotics that are destined for cities across the country and Ohio. In some instances, our drug cases led local drug task forces to apprehensions in larger drug and other criminal cases. All of this came right out of traffic stops.

Overall, troopers were responsible for making 2,676 felony stops last year. This included 1,704 felony arrests and 972 felony warrant apprehensions.

Through aggressive, visible, and fair enforcement, and the development of local partnerships with both rural and urban police departments across the state, we continue to focus on removing the criminal element from Ohio roadways.

#### **Accountability**

We are looked upon as a leader in data-driven law enforcement operations. Through the expansion of the Computer-Aided Dispatch system and the hard work of troopers and dispatchers, we have made great strides in capturing the work we do every day and projecting these achievements to the public through our Web site and media outlets.

We recently introduced more new technological applications that are helping reduce the burden of paperwork and are increasing the ability to disseminate mission critical information to our troopers on the road in a timely manner.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol's reputation is based on what each of our troopers, dispatchers and professional support staff is doing every day and what we have done as Ohio's state level law enforcement agency for more than 75 years. Through innovation, support, and dedication we are proud to live in communities in this area and to serve you each of you at the highest possible level.

We will continue to protect life, property, and promote traffic safety as we have always done – all the while showcasing our professional and ethical approach to public safety that has made us an internationally recognized model within law enforcement.