



ROAD WARRIORS

/Abbie Darst, Program Coordinator

Traffic is heavy on Interstate 65 coming out of Louisville. It is just after 5 p.m. as travelers, commuter and commercial, flood the interstate, tired and in a hurry to reach their destinations. Few notice a Cessna 172 circling high above, looking down on the typical Friday afternoon commotion. The plane's on-board observer urges the pilot to keep close track of a semi truck that seems to be weaving dangerously in and out of the congestion below. As brake lights flash, tires screech and horns blare, the plane observer radios a warning to a nearby Kentucky Vehicle Enforcement officer on the ground who issues a citation.

Another truck whizzes past one of KVE's unmarked Dodge Magnums, a specialized K-9 unit, and he leaps into hot pursuit. After nearly a mile, the semi finally lurches to a halt on the shoulder. The KVE officer and black Labrador exit their vehicle with caution. As the officer asks for the trucker's license and commercial papers, the K-9 begins responding to the truck's front tire, scratching furiously at the enormous chrome rim. Immediately, the officer calls for backup and orders the driver from the truck. After a thorough search of the semi, officers find nearly 500 pounds of marijuana stashed in various locations throughout the truck. The combined efforts of this force have made for a very productive day.

Few agencies in the commonwealth have the resources to carry out the complicated interdiction in the scenario above, but in recent years the Department of Kentucky Vehicle Enforcement has raised the bar on department collaboration, service and state security as its officers patrol the highways and byways across Kentucky.

KVE has been a part of Kentucky's law enforcement services since 1950, but in June 2004 KVE transitioned from a division in >>

Photos by Elizabeth Thomas

>> the Transportation Cabinet to its own department in the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet. Soon the department began to be recognized statewide.

“There is an expectation of our professionalism,” said KVE Maj. Jeff Heady, who has served with the department for 23 years. “When I started in 1984 we were just checking trucks at weight facilities. Now we have expanded to being recognized as one of the premier commercial vehicle enforcement agencies in the nation.”

Heady credits that increased professional expectation to becoming part of a cabinet that supports law enforcement.

“There is an expectation of our professionalism. We went from ... just checking trucks at weigh facilities, and now we’ve expanded to actually one of the premier commercial vehicle enforcement agencies in the nation.”

“We are now recognized as police officers,” he said. “Under the leadership of Commissioner [Greg] Howard, we have been given so many opportunities for training.”

KVE officers have to meet the Peace Officer Professional Standards just like any other Kentucky law enforcement officer.

KVE’s mission is to encourage and promote a safe driving environment through education and safety awareness while enforcing state and federal laws and regulations, placing special emphasis on commercial vehicles, according to their Web site.

“Our primary mission is commercial vehicle enforcement and regulation – 99 percent of what we do is on the highways,” Howard said. “However, that also involves the interaction of

commercial vehicles with cars.”

And with that function and purpose clearly understood by each of the department’s 173 officers, KVE is one of few agencies in the state that has had few issues in recent years in recruiting and retaining qualified officers, Howard said.

“When I arrived in 2004, there were 70 people on the state register who were interested in becoming a KVE officer,” Howard said. “In our most recent hiring process, there were more than 500 men and women on that same state register. I believe that our specialized function, recruiting efforts and some of the recent endeavors to im-

prove the overall atmosphere in the department have contributed to this significant increase.”

Others on the KVE staff agree that there are numerous reasons for the department’s success in this usually difficult area.

“Everybody here has a professional attitude, everybody works well together,” said Bobby Clue, KVE public information officer. “There’s a community feel at the local level between the posts. It’s just a real positive, local community feel between the different regions and everybody interacts and works very well together.

“A lot of agencies are very large and overwhelming to a brand new police officer,” Clue continued. “But they come here, and they are welcomed



with open arms, and it’s a very family-oriented atmosphere.”

But perhaps more than all these attributes, KVE’s accreditation in November by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies defines the level of professionalism obtained by the department in recent years.

“Up front we recognized accountability,” said David Herald, KVE’s accreditation manager. “The process allowed our agency the opportunity to self evaluate and to look at the agency in all areas. And in doing that, it gave us the opportunity to identify our strengths and more importantly our weaknesses. CALEA provided us the opportunity to do that.”

In the recommendation for accreditation after the on-site evaluation, CALEA’s assessors highlighted KVE’s extensive use of technology to aid officers and improve the speed and quality of the information and service provided to their clientele.

From the mobile data terminals in each vehicle, making the department nearly paperless, to the newly implemented barcode evidence-tracking system, KVE’s technology is a huge benefit both for its officers and for the other entities to which it provides information.

“The biggest benefit for KVE is the quality of the data that is collected from the field directly into the computer,” KVE Deputy Commissioner David Leddy said. “Most data collected is uploaded to federal commercial vehicle safety systems so it has to be right. Federal safety ratings of motor carrier businesses depend on the data we put in there and the federal government places great emphasis on the quality of data entered into their systems.”

In addition to data collection, MDTs allow officers to write citations and produce crime reports, safety inspections, intelligence reports and collision reports electronically. The electronic transmission of these reports allows for more timely availability of the information to the agency and the public, with considerable savings in data-entry costs.

The availability of new technology is only one of the advantages KVE officers receive.

“Technology improvements have definitely made a difference,

but, I believe we have to do more than just provide good equipment, excellent training and decent salaries, Howard said. “We have to know our employees. For me, understanding the people who work for me and making sure that they know we support them in every aspect of their lives promotes a work environment that produces tremendous results. Do I think they deserve more money? Absolutely, but it’s not all about money.”

KVE makes strides to be a well-trained agency in all areas, >>>



▶ KVE implemented a Bar Coded Evidence Analysis Statistics and Tracking system or BEAST in its newly renovated evidence room. The box to the right shows how new evidence is labeled in the evidence room.





KVE COMMISSIONER, GREG HOWARD

Appointed in January 2004, Greg Howard's experience includes a distinguished career in law enforcement. He is a retired captain of the Lexington Division of Police and worked at the Department of Criminal Justice Training from 1996 to 2003. Howard served in several capacities at DOCJT including law enforcement instructor, basic training supervisor and training support and operations director. Howard received a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice/Police Administration in 1990 and a master's degree in loss prevention and security in 2003, both from Eastern Kentucky University. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy Class 164. He is a past president of the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation and a founding member. He is also a member of the international and Kentucky associations of chiefs of police, National Academy Association, Kentucky Criminal Justice Council, Governor's Executive Highway Safety committee and the Governor's Executive Committee on Homeland Security. Greg is married to Keene Howard. They have two grown children, Jason Howard and Shannon Hager. They also have two grandchildren, Cade and Jack. ■

years. Labradors and Belgian Malnois are the two types of dogs that KVE uses in its K-9 unit.

"It's unique working with dogs and trucks," Jenkins said. "It takes special dogs and size is a big option for us. We have to have a good frame on a dog."

Another unique aspect of KVE's K-9 unit is the fact that they do all of their own training. Jenkins and Wilson have been trained through U.S. Customs, and KVE's dogs and handlers are trained together in an 8-week academy. In addition, they certify annually through the United States Police Canine Association, the largest and oldest active organization of its kind.

"It's easier to train the two together and it produces a much more efficient team," Jenkins said.

KVE's officers are assigned a dog like they are their car, gun or other state property, with property numbers, Wilson said. Though the dogs live with their handlers, there is a line drawn that keeps them a working service dog, not just another family pet.

Outside of their Special Operations Division, KVE has other programs that set them apart. One of KVE's newest programs targets the aggressive behaviors of cars and trucks on the highways, one of only five such programs funded by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks or TACT program was kicked off in September. It focuses enforcement efforts in two of Kentucky's most dangerous interstate corridors where a large number of commercial motor vehicle and passenger vehicle collisions occur. The program involves a public information campaign, and enforcement of violations such as excessive speeding, improper lane

changing, reckless driving, and not leaving sufficient space around all vehicles.

"It's not a vehicle, but a driving behavior that we are targeting," said Thad Sullivan, KVE's TACT grant coordinator. "If drivers would look at speed in terms of velocity, they're not gaining that much distance by speeding. So the gain is minimal, but the risk is phenomenal. And it's not just about the safety of that car or truck - when trucks are involved in collisions, there is a domino effect that locks up the highway for hours sometimes."

KVE plans to run the TACT program through September 2008. At the program's conclusion, they will have crash analysis data to see if it actually made a difference in the number and severity of collisions in the two targeted corridors in Louisville on I-65 and on I-75 in Boone and Kenton counties. Other police agencies partnering with KVE in this effort include the Kentucky State Police, Louisville Metro Police Department, and Boone County Sheriff's Office.

As the TACT program looks at aggressive and potentially dangerous driving habits, KVE is also tackling another deadly trend that is becoming more and more prominent across the state. In 2006, 12 KVE officers participated in Kentucky's first Drug Recognition Expert training class. Originating in Los Angeles, California, the DRE program has primarily been used in the western United States to combat the rising number of DUI arrests where the influence of drugs, not alcohol, causes impairment.

Working closely with DOCJT's Daryl Cook, the state DRE program coordinator and the International Association of Chiefs of Police, >>



>> especially leadership. All new first-line sergeants attend the Department of Criminal Justice Training's Academy of Police Supervision and numerous individuals have completed the Criminal Justice Executive Development program. In 2007, KVE also had its first graduate of the FBI National Academy. Moreover, KVE pays for officers to finish college degrees, bachelor and master, and currently has an individual working toward his doctorate.

"We require either 54 hours of college or two years of law enforcement, military or inspector experience to qualify for the register," Howard emphasized.

An educational requirement is just one way that KVE encourages

officers to meet a high standard across the board.

"We have problems, we have issues, but we address them quickly and the troops like that," he said. "Police officers should be held to a higher standard. If you're going to be a police officer then you have to be different."

"I often tell the officers that if they will put God first and family second, other parts of their personal lives will fall into place." Howard continued. "We can equip and train them to be professionals, but personal character comes from within and I believe people in law enforcement must be people of character."

KVE has also seen a lot of success in recent years in its Special Operations Division and other special programs the department has implemented to better serve the public. Only 10 officers make up KVE's Special Operations Division, but their accomplishments in criminal and drug interdiction and their K-9 unit are impressive.

With criminal interdiction as their main focus, according to Lt. Greg Jenkins, commander of special operations, the division concentrates on the commercial aspect of interdiction. They participate in numerous blitzes across the state, as well as a tri-state blitz with bordering states, pulling a variety of people from various regions and concentrating them in a particular highway corridor for three days.

Some of these blitzes result in large drug seizures, and recently, Sgt. Tony Wilson was involved in catching two murder suspects from North Carolina with the alleged murder weapon on an interdiction stop.

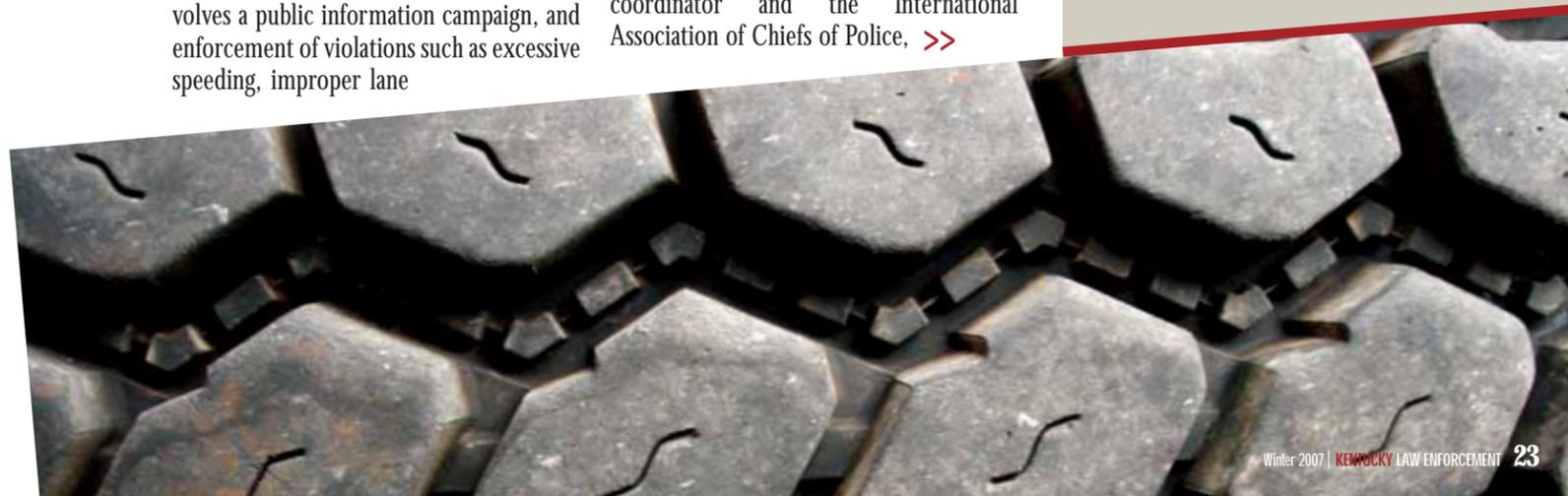
Wilson is one of four K-9 officers within the Special Operations Division.

"Some of our largest seizures involve the dogs," Wilson said, citing two cases where a K-9 helped find 1,400 pounds of marijuana and 51 kilograms of cocaine. "They are a very good tool."

Wilson has served with the KVE K-9 unit for 11 of the 17 years it has existed, and his black Labrador, Ben, has been with him for six



◀ Sgt. Tony Wilson and his K-9, Ben, demonstrate how KVE canines search large commercial vehicles for illicit materials. KVE only uses Labradors and Belgian Malnois at the agency because of their strong, sturdy frame.





>> KVE helped begin this training in Kentucky. To date there have been 33 KVE officers trained, as well as 20 officers from the KSP and 47 other men and women representing agencies across the state.

Though the trends started in the west, Kentucky is no stranger to these cases. Of the nearly 4,800 collisions in Kentucky that resulted in DUI arrests in 2006, drugs were involved in more than 20 percent, leading to 39 deaths and 972 injured persons, according to the 2006 Kentucky Crash Data report. Moreover, KSP labs report that 63 percent of DUI cases test positive for drugs. These numbers, coupled with the fact that Kentucky leads the nation in prescription drug abuse, shows the extensive need in the commonwealth for enforcement intervention.

KVE Capt. Phillip Frazier said the success of the program depends on the aggressiveness of the officer in not just apprehending, but also following through with prosecution of offenders. As a matter of fact, every officer must receive a nomination from a

local prosecutor to be admitted into the DRE program as a DRE nationwide standard.

“Making a good arrest is only half the battle – prosecution is the other half,” Frazier said. “They have to demonstrate that they have the ability to testify effectively in drug impairment cases.”

More than demonstrating good prosecution skills, candidates for the DRE program must have the drive to specialize in the field of drugged and intoxicated drivers. The class is very difficult with frequent updates and recertification, Frazier said.

“As DRE officers, we provide evidence, like a crime scene investigator, for the officer who has made the arrest,” Frazier said. “The misconception is that if a DRE officer is called in to assist with a drug-impaired driving arrest that we will take over the arrest. That’s not true. We help the officer gather evidence that will help that officer to prosecute the case in court.”

And as the agency with the most trained DRE officers in the state, KVE offers its services to other agencies as well.

“As a state agency, we’ve tried to select people throughout the state where, geographically, we have someone to assist no matter where in the state they are located,” Frazier explained. “This is not just a KVE prosecutorial program, this is for any agency.”

In August 2005, KVE, along with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the Kentucky Transportation Center at the University of Kentucky, implemented an Integrated Safety and Security Enforcement System using funding from the Federal Intelligent Transportation Systems and Kentucky Office of Homeland Security grants.

ISSES includes a radiation detection system, a license plate reader, an infrared brake monitoring system, an integrated user interface and a chemical detection unit. These features were added to three Kentucky weigh stations to detect radioactive material for safety and security, quickly and accurately identify commercial vehicles and improve the vehicle inspection process. The first one was placed in Laurel County on I-75, and the others are located in Simpson County on I-65 and Kenton County south of Cincinnati. A tactical team is being assembled that will provide an effective, immediate response to contain and control any radiological materials found during a scan.

“In the event that we would have a possible terrorist situation, it gives us an opportunity for interdiction before it reaches its destination,” said Sgt. Brian Jackson, who works at the Region 7 Laurel County post and has done extensive work with the radiological detectors since their implementation. “The team that we put together gives us the capability of effectively containing and taking control of the illicit material.”

Kentucky was the first state in the nation to have ISSES and has taken the lead on implementing the national standard in training and concept of operation, Jackson said. The primary purpose behind the radiological detectors is to find items such as dirty bombs, and KVE’s response team has been trained to not only use the equipment, but has also received training in radiation awareness and radiation detection, and tactical training to effectively contain the situation.

“We scan tens of thousands of trucks every month through the ISSES trying to keep the highways safer and trying to intercept some of this illicit material, and it’s working,” Jackson said. “Once implemented

nationwide, I think it will be very effective in stopping domestic attacks in the future. The next attack may be radiological or nuclear and this technology is designed to stop that.”

Though KVE’s mission hinges on its interaction with and regulation of the commercial trucking industry and interdiction on Kentucky’s highways, there is one program that has been implemented that has a different focus and purpose. The seven members of KVE’s honor guard strive to honor officers killed in the line of duty by serving at funerals and ceremonies for fallen officers across the commonwealth.

“I don’t look at it as a benefit for the department, but I look at it as a benefit for the person we are honoring,” said Lt. Brandon Eggen, KVE honor guard commander. “But it’s also a building block of a professional image. We give a professional representation of KVE no matter if it is at a funeral, parade, a conference presenting the colors, or whatever. It really seems to get people’s attention.”

Commissioner Howard thinks the honor guard is one of KVE’s most valuable and visible department representations.

“The Honor Guard represents our department in a unique way,” he said. “The skill, discipline and precision that is required of these officers is demonstrated each time they perform. There is a sense of country, a patriotic atmosphere that can completely change a setting when they participate. However, these officers know that this aspect of their job is not about them, but rather the focus is on honoring each specific situation.”

The honor guard is just another example of the successful programs that stand out at KVE, marking it as a progressive and professional agency excelling in law enforcement and meeting the needs of citizens across the state. J

◀ A semi truck comes through the Integrated Safety and Security Enforcement System at the KVE Laurel County Region 7 weigh facility. The ISSES is used to detect radiological materials and keep commercial vehicles from hauling such materials into the state.



KVE OBTAINS CALEA ACCREDITATION

In November, KVE became the first police agency in the country dedicated primarily to enforcement of commercial vehicle laws and regulations to gain CALEA accreditation /Abbie Darst, Program Coordinator

In just 28 months, the Department of Kentucky Vehicle Enforcement went from a brand new department with meager policies and procedures to an advanced, highly-effective agency, becoming only the fifth law enforcement agency in Kentucky to be fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

"It was a heck of a process," said Maj. David Herald, KVE's accreditation manager. "I understand why they give you three years. Nobody has an appreciation of that time span until they've gone through it."

Kentucky Vehicle Enforcement is the first police agency in the country dedicated primarily to enforcement of commercial vehicle laws and regulations to gain CALEA accreditation.

Though the official quest for CALEA accreditation began in April 2005, the process started much earlier than that, KVE Commissioner Greg Howard said.

"When we first made the transition from a division under the Transportation Cabinet to a department within the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, I had a department to run, but not the [resources] to run a department and I was doing a lot of stuff myself," he said. "We couldn't start the CALEA process then, but a lot of the decisions I made were based on starting accreditation in the near future. And thinking about that really got the ball rolling"

That forethought and vision set the tone for the entire agency, making the process run smoother for the department as a whole.

"Going through the CALEA process raises the standard of our whole department," Maj.

Jeff Heady said. "There's more accountability, not only for the officers, but it makes the leadership more accountable. It provides better documentation and work environment for policy and procedures. It also brings a lot of accountability with other law enforcement agencies that we work with and I think they respect us for that."

During their accreditation-seeking process, KVE gained more than just respect from other agencies in the state. The accreditation team was able to use the experience and expertise from other agencies that have successfully completed the process, such as the Lexington Division of Police and the Department of Criminal Justice Training, to assist them in getting everything in order for their on-site evaluation.

"When you talk about CALEA-accredited agencies, you are talking about the highest level of professional agencies in the business and those people are the ones that will be willing to sacrifice to make sure that all agencies are at that level, and Lexington Metro is one of the tops, no question," Herald said.

At the beginning of the accreditation process KVE had areas in which many of the CALEA standards were already being met, but just needed proper documentation. There were also particular areas that needed work to bring them up to where they needed to be. KVE's evidence room was one area chosen for a complete overhaul. The total renovation, which cost approximately \$200,000, included a new security system that tracks all access to the building and the addition of video recording capabilities within the facility. The evidence room was also fitted with an electronic evidence tracking

system called the Bar Coded Evidence Analysis Statistics and Tracking or BEAST. It consists of a bar code system allowing KVE to scan all evidence being processed by the department. Overall, the upgrade and redesign tripled the size of the evidence room.

KVE's quest for accreditation was a little different than some of their law enforcement counterparts, however. As a department that focuses on the regulation of the commercial trucking industry, not all of the typical segments of law enforcement apply to the agency.

Of the 459 standards required for accreditation under CALEA's law enforcement agency accreditation program, KVE had to comply with 315 because of the unique nature of the department's responsibilities, Herald said.

"We are going to do everything we can to market it and hope that we can be a lead agency to influence other commercial enforcement agencies out there across the country to come on board with CALEA and that process," Herald said.

KVE is excited about where accreditation has brought the agency and about watching the department-wide changes continue to trickle down to every level.

"People can tell you all day long about the benefits, but you can't understand it until you sit down and look at your policies and procedures," Herald said. "When you sit down and review your policies and procedures to the word of the standard that CALEA has set, you are assured that they are on solid ground." J

Accreditation programs are designed to improve the delivery of public safety services, primarily by maintaining a body of standards, developed by public safety practitioners, covering a wide range of up-to-date public safety initiatives; establishing and administering an accreditation process; and recognizing professional excellence. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) is the highest level of public safety accreditation in the world. Its exceptional standards and requirements are not only the basis for which most state accrediting bodies base their standards, but they also ensure that the agencies it accredits are of the highest caliber in the world.

CALEA ACCREDITED AGENCIES

Lexington Division of Police, November 1993; reaccredited November 2004
Newport Police Department, November 1998, reaccredited November 2004
Department of Criminal Justice Training, March 2003; reaccredited March 2006
Kentucky State Police, March 2003; reaccredited March 2006
Kentucky Vehicle Enforcement, November 2007

KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE ACCREDITED AGENCIES

Status: Approved for Third Five-Year Certification
Jeffersontown Police Department, January 2003
Bowling Green Police Department, August 2003
Western Kentucky University Police Department, January 2004
Fort Thomas Police Department, July 2004
Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Police Department, June 2005
Villa Hills Police Department, June 2005
University of Kentucky Police Department, January 2006
Anchorage Police Department, April 2006
Somerset Police Department, July 2006
Morehead State University Police Department, July 2006
Covington Police Department, July 2007
Newport Police Department, July 2007
Florence Police Department, July 2007

Status: Approved for Second Five-Year Certification
Henderson Police Department, January 2003

Erlanger Police Department, January 2003
Owensboro Police Department, April 2003
Wilders Police Department, April 2003
Calvert City Police Department, August 2003
Shively Police Department, August 2003
Southgate Police Department, July 2003
Cold Spring Police Department, January 2004
Saint Matthews Police Department, January 2004
Highland Heights Police Department, January 2004
London Police Department, April 2004
Benton Police Department, July 2004
Morehead Police Department, July 2004
Versailles Police Department, July 2004
Fort Wright Police Department, June 2005
Campbell County Police Department, June 2005
Crescent Springs Police Department, July 2005
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, August 2005
Fort Mitchell Police Department, July 2006
Taylor Mill Police Department, March 2007
Paris Police Department, March 2007
Oldham County Police Department, April 2007
Lakeside Park/Crestview Hills Police Authority, June 2007
Glasgow Police Department, June 2007
Eastern Kentucky University Police Department, June 2007
Alexandria Police Department, June 2007

Status: Approved for First Five-Year Certification
Horse Cave Police Department, January 2002

Cave City Police Department, March 2002
Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force, April 2003
University of Louisville Police Department, July 2003
Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverages Control (Enforcement), July 2003
Wilmore Police Department, August 2003
Eddyville Police Department, August 2003
Northern Kentucky University Police Department, January 2004
Lexington Division of Police, July 2004
Nicholasville Police Department, July 2004
Paducah Police Department, July 2004
Russellville Police Department, January 2005
Boone County Sheriff's Office, January 2005
Beaver Dam Police Department, April 2005
Audubon Park Police Department, July 2005
Falmouth Police Department, July 2005
Operation UNITE, July 2005
Berea Police Department, January 2006
Leitchfield Police Department, April 2006
Danville Police Department, June 2006
Harlan Police Department, July 2006
Kenton County Sheriff's Office, July 2006
Murray Police Department, April 2007
Murray State University Police Department, April 2007
Elizabethtown Police Department, April 2007
Hazard Police Department, June 2007
Radcliff Police Department, July 2007
Edgewood Police Department, July 2007 ■

