



## The 2000s

Criminal patrol, investigations and education about the dangers of impaired driving remained key elements in the Division's direction into 21st century law enforcement. These programs, developed in the late 1990s under the guidance of Colonel Marshall, allowed troopers to take proactive steps to uncover criminal activity during traffic stops. Criminal patrol units also focused on felony violations, including auto larceny and illegal drug activity.

It was June 28, 2000, when Trooper Anh M. Nguyen risked his life to save a crash victim. Tpr. Nguyen of the Delaware Post was one of just 88 in the U.S. and Canada who received the national Carnegie Medal in 2001 from the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission for the rescue. This prestigious national award is presented to persons who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

The incident that earned Tpr. Nguyen the award occurred just before noon, as he responded to a report of an injury crash on Interstate 71 in Morrow County. Upon his arrival at the scene, he found a burning

van atop a Lexus. Nguyen radioed for fire control, then retrieved his fire extinguisher and first aid kit. As he was assisting the Lexus driver away from the fire, he heard the driver of the van moaning. Despite the heavy smoke and fire, Nguyen climbed up the side of the vehicles to the van where he found the driver trapped and semi-conscious. Fighting the fire back with his extinguisher, Nguyen worked to free the man from the van and help him to the ground where several bystanders moved him to safety. The man was transported by helicopter to The Ohio State University Hospital where he was treated for second and third-degree burns and smoke inhalation, but survived the incident. Nguyen also received the Patrol's Superintendent's Citation of Merit in 2000 for his lifesaving actions.

On June 30, Colonel Marshall retired after more than 30 years on the force. After his retirement announcement, it was Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth L. Morckel who was chosen as the 13th superintendent of the Patrol.

Under Colonel Morckel's leadership, a new non-discriminatory policing strategy

**Since 1933, providing assistance to stranded motorists has been a trademark of the Ohio State Highway Patrol.**





**A new cadet class marches through the courtyard of the Patrol Training Academy.**

created policy changes, new training, and made traffic stop diversity data and complaint statistics easily accessible to the public. The Ohio Law Enforcement Non-Discrimination Resolution developed from a desire to change the public's perspective; citizens worried that law enforcement officers stopped people simply because of their race. Also known as "racial profiling," it is the act of a law enforcement official taking action against someone because of their race, and is not allowed under Ohio law. The resolution brought together a multi-agency committee to look at the issue.

Statistics breaking down arrests of minorities was soon listed on the Patrol's Web site so the public could have access to the data.

In April 2001, Governor Bob Taft requested 120 troopers be sent to Cincinnati to help local police ease race-related civil unrest - only the second time in Patrol history that troopers were called in to assist Cincinnati police..

Cincinnati Police Chief Colonel Thomas H. Streicher Jr. remembers well those nights of unrest. He said that the riots took them somewhat by surprise in their timing.

"We saw the magnitude of it the first night. Things got on a roll pretty quickly," said Colonel Streicher. "Everything was very unsettled. The normal news media attention already was there, but then there were calls from national, then international news media. We got calls from the U.K., Syria, Pakistan, Japan."

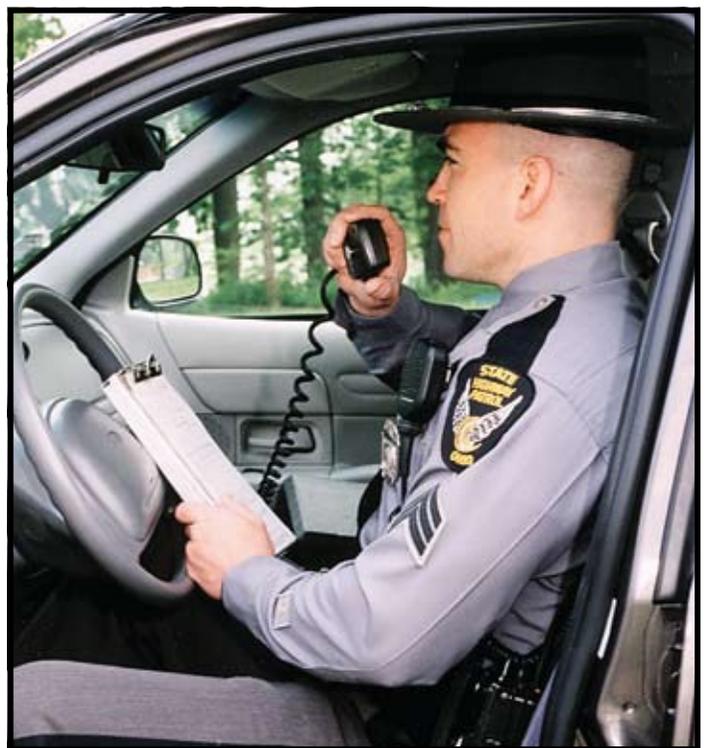
Troopers began coming in on the third day of the riots, just when Cincinnati Police officers were beginning to tire from the long shifts, according to the police chief. Colonel Streicher said. "When (Cincinnati Police Officers)

heard (troopers) were coming, it was like, here comes the cavalry. We had a rally when they came in, where our people conducted our roll calls. The SRT guys recognized the SWAT people and started getting to know them, their equipment, and the regular troopers immediately went over to our street guys and did the same. Even supervisors and command officers began shaking hands. It was like two extended families that came together."

The Patrol always emphasized safety, whether on the road, for children in school, and adults at work every day. But safety took on a whole new meaning for the entire country following the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001. On that day, teams of terrorists hijacked commercial airplanes and used them as weapons. Two planes were deliberately crashed into the World Trade Center towers in New York, ultimately causing them to collapse.

Another plane crashed into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. A fourth plane crashed in rural Pennsylvania after passengers fought to retake control from the hijackers. Thousands of people were killed.

The Patrol's response was immediate. That same day, troopers were placed on indefinite heightened alert, which meant they paid extra attention to details in the behavior of individuals, increased security in state offices and increased the number of officers assigned to interstate patrol.



**Troopers still focus on keeping Ohio roadways safe.**



**Pictured above are NFL Hockey League Referee and Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Auxiliary Recruit Daniel Marouelli, and Staff Lieutenant Lance Mathess at the OPP Auxiliary Graduation Ceremony on August 12, 2005. S/Lt. Mathess addressed the graduating class.**

Ohio troopers increased surveillance of commercial trucks and other modes of transport on highways – especially vehicles carrying potentially dangerous hazardous materials - for possible use in terrorist activity. Ohio opened its weigh stations to operate 24 hours a day; by the end of 2001, the Division conducted nearly 18,000 hazardous material inspections – nearly four times more than the year before.

The Division partnered with local and federal agencies with regard to safety issues, including precautionary steps developed with fire departments and emergency management agencies.

Troopers also provided escorts for mail trucks that traveled from New Jersey and Washington, D.C., to Lima, Ohio. The vehicles were en route to Titan Scan Industries, which decontaminated mail that possibly had been exposed to anthrax.

Overtime security details were assigned to state offices in Columbus, Toledo and Cleveland, and troopers handled investigations into incidents of suspicious mail receipt, as well as training for employees regarding the safe handling of mail.

The Ohio State University's Stadium was another high-profile location which merited increased security measures. Troopers positioned at gates monitored the en-

trance of nearly 100,000 fans at each Ohio State university home football game, and the university drastically changed its policy as to what fans could bring into the stadium.

In addition to ensuring the Patrol's inclusion of additional protective duties while maintaining service levels in place before September 11, Colonel Morckel served as a law enforcement representative on the State Building Security Review Committee, which sent security recommendations to the General Assembly. He also was chair of the Ohio Homeland Security Task Force's Law Enforcement Subcommittee that addressed homeland security issues.

Colonel Morckel oversaw the addition of a new LEADS Intelligence Information System, so all law enforcement agencies could share the latest information on arrests and contacts. Also, Ohio troopers joined forces with truck drivers in 2002 for Highway Watch, a national program that enabled truck drivers to alert law enforcement officials about highway safety and security concerns.

One challenge that resulted from the increase in security measures was maintaining the level of service that existed before 9/11. In a February 2002 monthly message, Colonel Morckel stated that new duties taken on after the September 11 attacks, "as well as higher traffic volume, have greatly increased demands for trooper services, yet Patrol manpower remains the same. Since 1974, the uniform strength of the Patrol has changed by less than two troopers per county. However, the number of registered vehicles increased 75 percent and roadway miles increased 65 percent in the same time in Ohio."

Unfortunately, 2001 had more bad news – Trooper Frank G. Vazquez, West Jefferson, died November 6 after an impaired driver struck him while he was working outside of his patrol car the night before. As he stood on the highway, a vehicle, driven by an impaired driver, hit Vazquez's patrol car and subsequently, Vazquez. The suspect, who was convicted and only sentenced to eight and one-half years in prison, had four prior offenses of driving under the influence at the time he killed Vazquez.

As a result of Tpr. Vazquez's death, legislators approved a new law that toughened penalties for reckless or impaired drivers who kill police officers. The law expanded sentencing options for judges when imposing penalties.

In a similar scenario, Tpr. Leonard Gray (Athens) sustained serious injuries after being hit on December 12, 2002 – just a few days before his retirement - by a driver impaired by drugs. Gray was directing traffic around a jack-knifed tractor-trailer, when the drug-impaired driver struck him with his car.

Gray slowly recovered and retired in July 2003.

Meanwhile, Ohio Rep. Rob Portman worked to develop a new law – one that provided assistance to states to encourage them to address the problem of drug-impaired driving. A contingency from the Patrol, including Gray, traveled to Washington, D.C., in March 2004 to support the new legislation.

In January 2002, troopers and other law enforcement agencies received congratulations for counter-terrorism efforts from President George W. Bush during an Ohio visit. Later that same year, several troopers were assigned full-time to the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) headquartered in Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Toledo. These groups were responsible for the collection and processing of terrorist intelligence and for connecting different groups throughout the nation to share this information. The primary goal of JTTF operations was the prevention of terrorist attacks by identifying, investigating and prosecuting terrorists and terrorist organizations. Officers directly involved in major investigations resulted in the arrest of individuals tied to terrorist organizations within Ohio.

Further cutting the number of fatal crashes remained the Patrol's focus throughout the beginning of the new century. Fatal crashes continued to decline in numbers - in 2001, there were 672 fatal crashes, but that number decreased to 632 the next year – a reduction of nearly six percent.

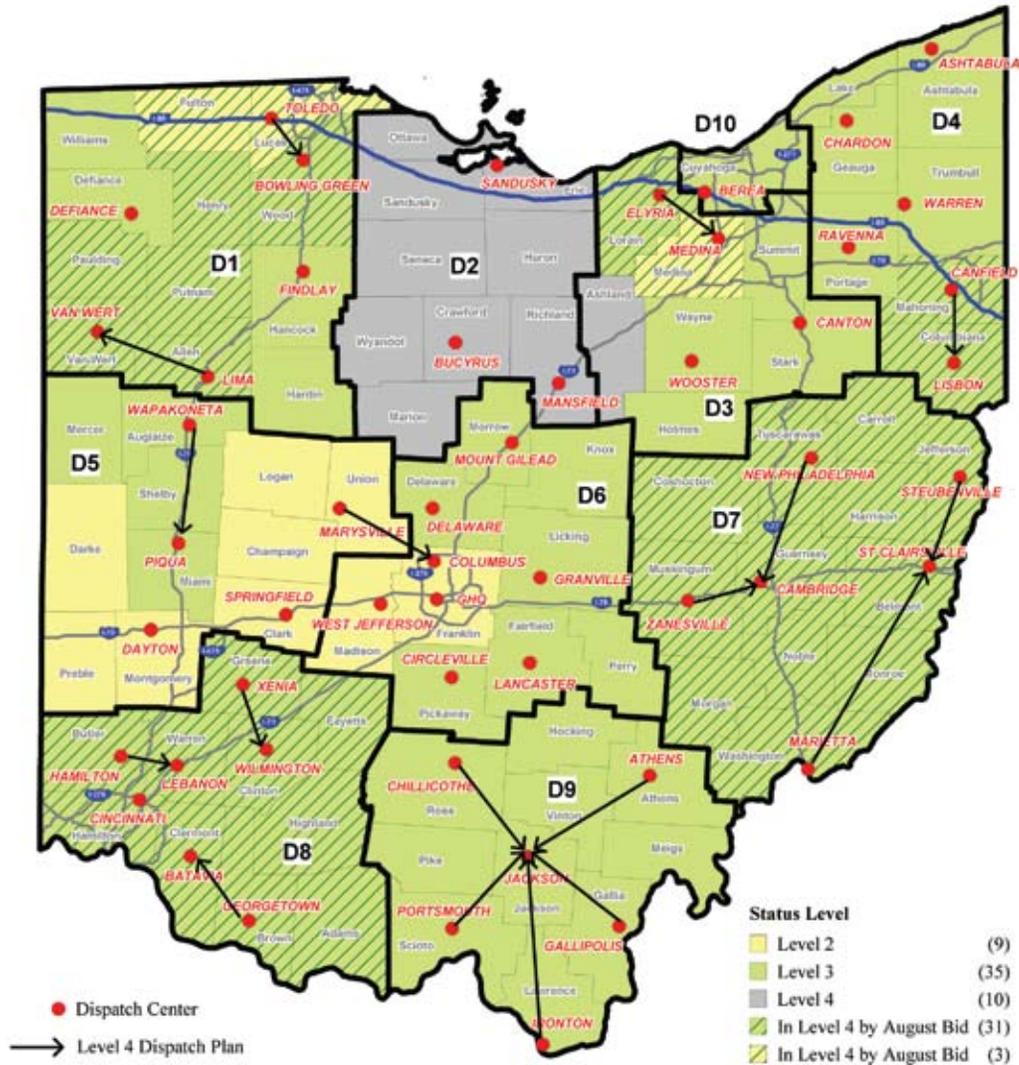
After Colonel Morckel's retirement on January 10, 2003, Lieutenant Colonel Paul D. McClellan became the 14th superintendent.

For a decade, the Ohio State Highway Patrol vehicles had virtually remained unchanged. As issues of security and safety arose, the Patrol began to investigate changing the colors of its vehicles to provide greater visibility and promote overall officer safety.

With this concern for officer safety and the celebration of the Patrol's 70th anniversary during 2003, a color change was made from the fleet of charcoal gray to a more visible white Patrol vehicle. This change continued to move the Patrol towards the goal of providing troopers the safest, most reliable and best equipment available.

In 2003, there was a complete overhaul of LEADS.





Operational Dispatching Status map provided by the Ohio State Highway Patrol Office of Technology and Communication Services.

As a result the electronic communication network for Ohio criminal justice agencies was able to support graphic images, such as mug shots and fingerprints. LEADS also linked the Patrol to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), which was not available to LEADS users previously.

Also new in 2003 was the Ohio Amber Alert Plan. This missing child response program used resources of law enforcement and the media to notify the public of missing children. Division representatives served on the state committee. Colonel McClellan served on the Amber Alert Committee during his tenure.

The Patrol won first place in the state agency category of the 2003 Best Dressed Police Department contest, sponsored by the National Association of Uniform Manufactur-

ers and Distributors. As a result of its placing, the complete line of Patrol uniforms was featured in the September 2003 issue of Law and Order magazine.

Colonel McClellan revealed an ambitious strategic goal after taking over the reins of the Patrol's leadership. The program, called LifeStat 1.0, called for troopers to make as much contact as possible with motorists to educate them and encourage changing dangerous driving behaviors. Every sworn officer, driver examiner, motor carrier inspector, dispatcher and professional staff member was given the challenge to help get the Patrol to its goal of only one fatality per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in Ohio by the end of 2007.

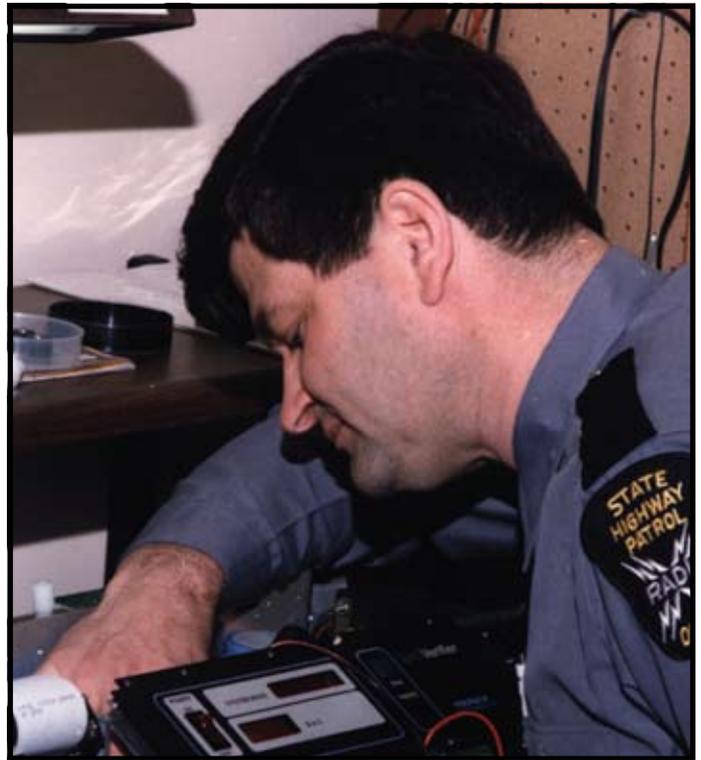
The goal was in line with the U.S. Department of Transportation and World Health Organization's mission to

reduce unnecessary and preventable deaths on the nation's roadways. By using evaluation, education and enforcement, troopers were able to analyze where crashes were happening, why they were occurring, and what actions were needed for future crash prevention. Enforcement became more focused, too, as each Post management team evaluated special community situations and deployed troopers when and where they were needed to best prevent crashes and fatalities.

As commanders focused on meeting Colonel McClellan's LifeStat 1.0 challenge, the Patrol began a significant transition to capture and utilize more data with in-car computers, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and GPS technology for location-based reporting. With this increase in data capture, there was an equal need to analyze that data for trends, predictions and strategic planning.

At General Headquarters, the Statistical Analysis Unit began examining data captured in traffic stops, crashes and case activity to identify trends that were used for operational deployment of resources to stop violators, prevent crashes and catch criminals. Information and tools provided to command staff included: Monthly Business Plan; Patrol and Public Safety Reports; GIS maps of injury and fatal crashes; Hotspot analysis; Interactive Google Earth® maps; Monthly Division statistical summaries; Commercial vehicle fatal crash causation summaries; and District line inspections.

On a daily basis those products were delivered to the



**Radio technicians not only operate high-tech equipment, but they also repair much of the system used by Division personnel.**

field commanders, supervisors, and troopers, assisting them with their efforts toward achieving McClellan's goal.

One example of this is found in the OhioSafe Commute program, which focused on making rush-hour travel in metropolitan areas safer and easier. At the time, 21 percent of traffic deaths in Ohio occurred in the four most populous counties. Through OhioSafe Commute, the Patrol teamed up with the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Ohio Department of Transportation, and local law enforcement agencies to station officers along the busiest highways during peak hours to deter crash-causing behavior.

The Division's continued to focus on problem site identification – using traffic citations, data analysis and geo-mapping as tools to reduce crashes – efficiently placed troopers in areas where problems occurred, thus aiding in the crash fatality reduction. In late 2004, Governor Bob Taft created a task force to enhance highway safety. The interagency group began meeting in early 2005 and looked at what areas were safer than others and why; efficient enforcement and engineering solutions to problem areas; and working with residents and local governments to reduce crashes on dangerous highway stretches. The task force



**A motor carrier enforcement inspector advises a trucker on part of his equipment. Details count, and these inspectors make sure to check every one of them before allowing large tractor-trailers back on the road.**



**Educating children about staying safe and similar messages are part of a trooper's job. Not only does it create a bond in which a child is able to realize trust for an officer, but it perpetuates positive, life-saving values.**

consisted of representatives from the Patrol, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Ohio Department of Transportation, and the Governor's Highway Safety Office.

Another area of focus was emphasizing enforcement of OVI and aggressive driving laws. One letter to the Patrol expressed gratitude for the Division's diligence in this area. It reads,

"Thank you to the individual who answered the telephone at the 1-877-7-PATROL number on March 25, 2004. At the time, I was traveling on I-75 south at mile marker 99. I was able to explain details of what I defined as an erratic, harassing driver. Having dealt with this driver for 60 miles, watching him jump lanes at speeds in excess of 85 mph, as well as other unsafe acts, it was comforting to have someone to tell this to. I provided the type of vehicle and the out-of-state tag to her.

"I'm quite happy to say that within a couple of miles, I saw a trooper pull out of the median and move into traffic behind the vehicle that I had called about. The vehicle then decided to exit the interstate and the trooper followed him onto the exit. I couldn't see anymore after that as I continued to travel south toward my home, but what a smile it brought to my face. Please tell those involved that they made my day."

On June 9, 2005, the Patrol was honored to host President George Bush and United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales at its Training Academy for an important homeland security policy speech. Through his selection of the Academy as the location from which to urge Congress to renew the Patriot Act, it was clear President Bush under-

stood the Division's critical role in the war on terror.

Efforts to share intelligence information improved in 2005. The Patrol was one of the first agencies to join the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, a state-wide data-sharing and communications system funded by homeland security dollars. The system provided registered law enforcement users secure access to hundreds of agency databases via the Ohio Attorney General's Law Enforcement Gateway.

Sharing law enforcement resources aided in uprisings in Toledo in 2005. On October 15, 2005, a rally involving members of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement (NSM) turned into a riot when conflict arose between NSM members and residents of a north Toledo neighborhood. After Toledo Mayor Jack Ford requested assistance from Governor Bob Taft, 50 Findlay District troopers, and 100 troopers overall, responded to help restore order. Two months later, more than 100 troopers were part of a cooperative law enforcement response that maintained order at a second NSM event.

Inter-operable communications was another key tool used to succeed both in the Patrol's core mission and homeland security responsibilities. The Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) became Ohio's 800-megahertz radio system which provided voice and data service across the state and allowed officers from different agencies to communicate directly via radio. By the end of 2005, the Patrol was using mobile computer terminals, 800-megahertz MARCS radios, and computer-aided dispatch in most of the state.

The Criminal Intelligence Unit continued gathering and exchanging criminal, terrorism, officer safety and technology information with international, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The unit produced intelligence bulletins that, in 2005, reached 4,000 agencies worldwide and serviced Patrol posts by conducting database inquiry requests for information related to local issues or targets.

Heading into the 2006 Independence Day holiday, troopers got closer to predicting where serious injury and fatal crashes occur before they happen thanks to a new probability forecasting model developed by The Ohio State University's Statistical Consulting Service (SCS).

The forecasting model, believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, provided quantitative predictions of the likelihood of future crashes. Additionally, the new model provided some insight into the causes of crashes and will be used to enhance Patrol dispatching and crash prevention strategies.

Built on historical crash data, the probabilistic forecasting model quantified the likelihood that a serious or fatal crash could occur on interstates in five metro areas around the state. The predictions produced by this model were used along with Geomapping statistics to dispatch troopers to likely crash locations at the appropriate times. In addition, the model provided insight into key crash causing factors leading to a higher likelihood of crashes. This project with the Patrol utilized five years of crash data to develop models to keep the people of Ohio safer on the roadways. The predictive models provided third-party validation to the Patrol's established predictive philosophy of assigning resources to historically-known problem areas.

The partnership with the Cincinnati Police Department that developed in the spring of 2001 began to pay huge dividends in traffic safety successes later in the decade, and became a blueprint for how the Patrol worked in Ohio's major metropolitan areas with local law enforcement for years to come.

In 2006 Hamilton County, which is the county that includes Cincinnati, had the third most fatal crashes among all Ohio Counties – killing 62 motorists. When Patrol researchers analyzed this information with colleagues from the Cincinnati Police Department, and with Cincinnati



**Instruction and inspection are all part of the job for troopers – not only for smaller passenger vehicles, but for big rigs, as well.**

Mayor Mark Mallory's Office, they collectively realized something had to be done. Thanks in large part to the commitment of Cincinnati's Chief Streicher, and the support and resources from Mayor Mallory, huge traffic safety successes were realized.

The Cincinnati Metropolitan Area Initiative utilized a combination of high-visibility enforcement, multi-agency OVI deterrence, specialized computer mapping and a strategic public information campaign to promote traffic safety on Ohio roads.

In 2007 during an 11-week enforcement effort, the Highway Patrol and Cincinnati Police issued: 6,223 traffic citations and 4,461 warnings; Arrested 299 impaired drivers; Charged 51 suspects for drug violations; and Recovered 16 stolen vehicles.

The Cincinnati metro enforcement program became so successful it served a model used throughout the state in the metro areas of Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Akron.

An editorial that appeared in the January 4, 2008, edition of the Cincinnati Enquirer emphasized the impact of the Patrol-Cincinnati Police effort:

“Saving lives in Cincinnati means more than just fighting criminals on the street. It also means getting bad drivers off the street. A two-year traffic enforcement initiative by the Cincinnati Police Department and the Ohio State Highway Patrol has shown striking effectiveness in reducing traffic fatalities, injuries and accidents...”

It went on to say:

“The results are impressive. Traffic deaths have been reduced by a third, injuries by 13 percent and crashes by 8 percent since 2005.

An intensive 11-week holiday campaign alone took 299 impaired drivers off the road. The campaign contributed to Ohio having what appears to have been its safest traffic year in 70 years in 2007...”

The editorial ended with this:

“The energy, strategy and inter-agency cooperation around this venture is very encouraging. Reducing traffic accidents may not have quite the drama of reducing crime but the results - improved safety and quality of life - are terrific news for us all.”

Ohio's crash fatality rate continued to drop during Colonel McClellan's term. In 2006, fatalities fell to the lowest rate in the past 70 years. The LifeStat 1.0 initiative, also was recognized as one of the 10 best law enforcement initiatives in the United States.

Colonel McClellan was also widely known for his work developing commercial motor carrier enforcement

programs and safety partnerships with the trucking industry, to keep commercial vehicles traveling safely along Ohio's highways. In 2006, he became a member of the Ohio Trucking Association Hall of Honor; the first person outside of the trucking industry to receive that recognition.

One very visible change in the Division's patrolling efforts came when motorcycles joined the fleet of cruisers in June 2006. The effort, introduced in part to combat increases in motorcycle fatalities, brought back motorcycle patrols after a 50-year absence. The Division's continuing efforts to become more fuel efficient also compelled the return of motorcycle units; a motorcycle unit operated at one-third the cost of a patrol car tactical squad. The unit's success in Columbus led to the development of a second motorcycle unit to patrol the Cincinnati metro area in 2007.

Also changing to become more efficient was the Patrol Auxiliary. Its structure changed in 2006 to resemble more closely the Division's set-up, and Colonel McClellan ap-

pointed new leaders – Auxiliary Colonel Brent Rawlins and Auxiliary Lieutenant Colonel Steven Morgan. Colonel Rawlins followed in the footsteps of former Auxiliary leaders William (Tom) Forbes (2003-2006), Tom Charles (1996-2003), William Duffy (1989-1995), Wesley Osborne (1973-1988), William Konold (1957-1973), and Floyd Hartpence (1942-1957).

On September 28, 2006, the Division mourned at the loss of Sgt. Dale Holcomb, 45, and Tpr. Joshua Risner, 29, of the Gallipolis Post. The officers, and motorist Lori Smith, 32, of Vinton, died in a two-vehicle crash on Jackson Pike just west of Mitchell Road in Gallia County. It was the first time in Patrol history that two troopers were killed in connection with one incident.

Colonel McClellan, a 32-year veteran of the Patrol, served at every rank. He announced his retirement on March 16, 2007, necessitating the naming of Major Robert W. Booker Jr. as interim superintendent until a replacement for McClellan could be chosen. Colonel Richard H.





**School bus inspections are a vital, twice annual event for the Patrol. Each year every school bus – more than 46,000 in 2008 – in the state is checked two times against a list of safety criteria and may be taken off the road until problems are repaired.**

Collins took the oath of office as the new superintendent on April 20, 2007. Collins had been the commander of the Patrol's Findlay District at the time of his promotion to superintendent.

Colonel Collins continued to build upon the Patrol's past successes with the 24/7 Initiative. This new direction for the Division aimed toward a goal of a 10 percent reduction in traffic fatalities by the end of 2011, increases in criminal patrol activity and a greater reliance on CAD (Computer-Aided Dispatch) data entries to support analysis and geo-mapping of traffic and criminal patrol activity.

The goal of the 24/7 Initiative was to reduce serious traffic crashes and apprehend the criminal element through high-visibility, aggressive traffic enforcement and increased public awareness.

LifeStat 1.0 focused exclusively on the statewide reduction of traffic fatalities based on vehicle miles traveled, or VMT. The new program provided a traffic safety goal based on the past three-year average. The 24/7 Initiative was built to embrace criminal patrol enforcement that resulted from traffic safety efforts, adding value to what troopers did every day. Also, the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system was utilized to its fullest potential for the first time.

“The most obvious thing people will see is we are changing the traffic fatality goal to a four-year, 10 percent reduction by the end of 2011.” Colonel Collins said. “As far as other changes that I think are going to make a difference, we are increasing the emphasis of criminal patrol activity, reducing case and recap paperwork, and are going to have a greater reliance on CAD data entries to support analysis and geo-mapping of traffic and criminal patrol activity.”

Colonel Collins pointed out that, over the last several years before his promotion to lead the Division, location-based information had improved the ability to target high crash areas of the state through improved data capturing and the introduction of geographic information software (GIS) mapping.

Similar to the increased ability to identify high crash areas more effectively, the introduction of location-based criminal information was deemed a way to assist in aggressively pursuing areas of increased illegal activity. While troopers had successfully utilized a limited number of short-term Multi-Agency Police Saturations to increase traffic safety and maximize criminal patrol operations in areas of the state, the ability to locate all Patrol criminal arrests proved beneficial in planning criminal enforcement efforts. As a result, troopers could focus more effectively on Ohio roads used by criminals.

Another aspect to the 24/7 Initiative, Operational Dispatching was a realignment of dispatching resources to maximize the use of personnel, equipment, and communi-



**Mock fatal crashes present a realistic scene for high school students. They are used to deter teenagers from drinking and driving.**

cations operations. This consolidation of dispatch locations was designed to create a higher-level of service and faster response times for the motoring public.

One of the benefits with Operational Dispatching was dispatchers became part of a larger work group, which improved working conditions. Collins realized when a dispatcher is part of a shift with multiple dispatchers working in a communications center setting, reasonable use of leave, work assignments and a more cohesive operation are achieved.

Another benefit to Operational Dispatching was the

coordination of communications. As Patrol Post personnel in the latter part of the decade began working across post and district lines more frequently, coordinated dispatcher operations were necessary to ensure officer safety and efficient communications to support greater safety services to the public.

Ultimately Operational Dispatching allowed for the maximization of dispatching and equipment resources. Patrol dispatchers remained on duty 24/7 to support field units in their enforcement and safety efforts on the road. The goal was to have an efficient dispatching network



**Retired Superintendent  
Kenneth L. Morckel**

## September 11

After an explosion rocked one of the Twin Towers in New York City on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, the day still seemed ordinary in Ohio – nothing to be concerned about locally, according to initial news reports.

Ohio State Highway Patrol Colonel Kenneth L. Morckel, who was named superintendent in July 2000, was vacationing

with his wife, Sandy, for the first time since his appointment to the position.

“On 9-11-01, my wife, Sandy, and I were on the Outer Banks of North Carolina with friends,” Morckel said in recalling his experiences that day. “This was the first time we had tried to escape for a few days of vacation – very bad timing. I had just left our rented beach house for a round of golf when the first plane struck the first tower. It was not reported as an airline and certainly was not reported as an attack, so my friends and I proceeded to the golf course.”

As they arrived at the golf course, however, Morckel said things changed quickly. They saw the reports of a second plane striking the second Twin Tower. “My friends had been in the armed services and I had attended several briefings regarding the

1993 attack on the World Trade Center, so very little was discussed as we immediately loaded up and returned to the beach house.”

The next few hours were consumed with telephone calls to Patrol General Headquarters and Ohio Public Safety Department Director and Lt. Governor Maureen O’Connor’s office, he said. The calls often discussed unconfirmed missing flights in the Cleveland area. One of these flights was United Flight No. 93, which crashed into a rural Pennsylvania field, killing the passengers and terrorists on board.

Panic gripped the country; there were false reports of more missing flights and possible attacks.

“My initial problem was that I needed to get back to Ohio and we had flown to (North Carolina) in my friend’s private aircraft. The Federal Aviation Association had grounded all private and commercial flights after the attack. Rental cars were simply not available anywhere near the coastal North Carolina area,” Morckel said. “One of my friends, a former Vietnam pilot, offered to fly me back to Columbus at an altitude well below radar coverage and thus undetected by the FAA (he was quite serious).”

After declining his friend’s offer, Morckel said he called North Carolina Highway Patrol Colonel Richard Holden, who sent a trooper in a marked car in just a few minutes. The trooper took the Morckels to New Bern, N.C., where the highway patrol had arranged a car be held for them to drive back to Ohio.

“For the next six hours, I drove a little four-cylinder rental car as fast as it would go toward

that used our technology, equipment, and personnel to its maximum potential and ensures professional operations in support of our troopers in the field. This plan was designed and intended to increase the professionalism, working conditions and operational effectiveness for greater public value.

In 2006, Cuyahoga County had the most fatal crashes among all Ohio counties, with 68 motorists killed. Cuyahoga County had nearly 14,000 traffic crashes over the previous four years with more than 25 percent involving an injury or death — an average of one injury or fatal crash

every 51 minutes. There were 243 fatal crashes resulting in 264 deaths in the past four years on Cuyahoga County roadways.

In an initiative to reduce fatal and injury crashes in the Cleveland metropolitan area, the Patrol partnered with law enforcement agencies in Cuyahoga County in 2007.

The Cuyahoga County Metropolitan Initiative was statistically supported and used a combination of high-visibility enforcement, multi-agency OVI deterrence as well as a strategic public information campaign to promote traffic safety on Cuyahoga County roads. “With law

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Ohio,” Morckel said. “What I will always remember about this drive is the reaction of the average citizens along the routes from North Carolina to Ohio. Standing on overpasses and hanging out of passing vehicles, the otherwise disinterested and uninvolved citizens of our country were feverishly waving the American flag, honking their horns, and yelling support for the U.S.A.”

As soon as he arrived home at 10:00 p.m., he checked in at GHQ to see if anything else could be done. Things were stable at that point, so he went home to get a little sleep. The morning after, he reported in early.

“The next few days and weeks were a blur of activity, which was all highlighted by Ohio state troopers volunteering to do anything we could possibly find for them to do to assist the country,” he said. “Ironically, after I contacted Colonel Jim McMahon of the New York State Police, we quickly determined this deep desire to assist was one of the problems being faced at ground zero in New York City. Too many self-dispatched volunteers without proper training or proper equipment were flooding the scene of this tragedy.

I believe we made the correct decision to hold our resources in Ohio until Colonel McMahon and the NYSP requested our assistance. We continued to be in contact with the NYSP for accurate updates and rumor control, but they never called for assistance and thanked us later for having the discipline to ask before responding.”

What the Patrol did was to increase presence on the outer belts of Cleveland, Columbus and

Cincinnati. This move created a greater sense of security among motorists and citizens, which was crucial at the time. “Today that seems like a meaningless gesture, but at the time there was tremendous uncertainty about additional attacks and many citizens reacted very positively to these extra OSP patrols,” Morckel said.

Not long after the 9/11/01 attacks, like many troopers, Tpr. Frank Vasquez worked very hard to keep motorists safe. He had stopped a motorist on Interstate 270 on the west side of Columbus. His assignment to the Columbus outerbelt was part of the increased Patrol presence as a result of the stepped up security from the 9/11 attacks. During the stop, an impaired driver struck Tpr. Vasquez’s Patrol car from behind, sending it into the stopped vehicle and Tpr. Vasquez. He was 24 years old.

“I have always considered Tpr. Vasquez to be one of the first citizens in this country to pay the ultimate sacrifice in response to the 9/11 attacks,” Morckel said.

Morckel also pointed out that the Patrol was highly involved in creating the State of Ohio Security Task Force, one of the first state-level groups formed in the country to deal directly with terrorism.

“As usual, during these first few days, weeks and months after the 9/11 attacks, the Ohio State Highway Patrol was the ‘go to’ agency for the Governor of Ohio regarding immediate response and accurate information” Morckel said. “Throughout my nearly 33 years of service to the State of Ohio, I have never seen that to be any different, and I am confident it never will be.”

enforcement in Cuyahoga County, we formulated a plan to improve traffic safety and the quality of life for people using Cleveland's public roadways. Through development of a true working relationship, information sharing, learning from each other, and teaming together on enforcement efforts, I am confident this initiative will make a difference," Colonel Collins said.

A unique aspect of the Cuyahoga County Metro Initiative was that, for the first time in the history of the Division, a major enforcement operation was dispatched from hundreds of miles away. The entire enforcement effort was dispatched from the Columbus Communication Center and used dispatchers from all areas of the state. This innovative approach proved to be a huge success.

Using the full capabilities of the MARCS radio system, dispatchers were able to provide dispatching services from Columbus to Cleveland for up to 25 troopers at one

time with little or no difficulty. By being able to handle this task at the Communication Center through the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System, local post operations were uninterrupted by the additional units in their area.



**Sgt. Steve Click**

## September 11

Sgt. Steve Click remembers well the aftermath of terrorist attacks of 2001.

Click, along with three others from Ohio, spent a week in New York City in November 2001, and again in April 2002, as a critical incident stress management team. The group, made up of Click, a deputy sheriff, a fire department representative

and a mental health professional, talked with police officers, fire department personnel, rescue operators, and even civilians about their traumatic experiences during and after September 11, 2001.

"I think we did a lot more in the evening hours than we did during the day," Click said. "We got to spend a lot of time with a lot of people."

Click appreciated that the Patrol leadership approved his application to go to New York with the stress management group. "Colonel Morckel and

Captain Reel were very supportive of my mission". The team went to New York together and split up to help host meetings to help police department employees cope with the stress of the incident. There were 41,000 people employed by the New York Police Department, and all of them were required to attend the briefings, Click said.

But many times, it took one-on-one moments, often off the cuff, for officers to trust another person enough to talk about their own nightmares. After spending the day talking to officers in groups, members of the teams spent their evenings at the World Trade site talking to rescue workers and officers assigned to security.

"They're not going to open up to a civilian," Click said. "But they were comfortable with a fellow law enforcement officer. We didn't tell them, 'We know what you're going through,' because, clearly, we hadn't gone through that. But they knew that we'd all pulled bodies out of cars. We'd all seen dead people. We had all been involved in critical incidents and that gave us some credibility."

"I remember we attended the tree lighting. We had on our POPPA (Police Officers Providing Peer Assistance) jackets; New York police officers know this group. There was one guy who said to me that he

*This book contains a glimpse into the events of the last 75 years for the Division. This only contains a miniscule portion of all the heroic, selfless, and amazing accomplishments made by the men and women of the Patrol over the years. It also does not come close to cataloguing the everyday achievements of personnel that remain in the background, but are essential to the smooth operation of the Division.*

*In 75 years, many things have changed – the uniforms, the racial and gender diversity of personnel,*

*paperwork, training and posts. But the mission of the Patrol remains constant from the days of O. W. Merrell and Colonel Lynn Black: to protect life and property, promote traffic safety and provide professional public safety services with respect, compassion and unbiased professionalism. This will stay the same through the next 25 years and beyond, thanks to those who pointed the way in the beginning and those who follow in subsequent generations.*

thought it was a good thing that we were there, and that some guys probably needed to talk about what happened. He said that he wasn't one of them, but he was glad we were there for those who needed it. Two hours later, I knew everything that had happened to him that day, everything that happened to him afterward. There were things he told me that I'm sure he never told another living person, and probably hasn't to this day."

Click remembers a moment after his first day there in November, when he thought the emotional weight of the attacks and the chaos in its wake might be too much for him. After visiting the "hole" and the "pile" at the site of the destroyed Twin Towers, Click remembers standing in the cemetery of St. Paul's Chapel at Trinity Church, New York's oldest public building in continuous use, and looking up at what was left of one of the buildings. Crews were working to bring the rest of the building down while he watched.

"It was still smoldering. You could smell the burning. When we got back to the office building where we worked, it stayed in our clothes," Click said. "It was just overwhelming standing there in that cemetery next to a church where George Washington went to worship after his (1789) inauguration. And you could see the (destroyed) buildings...where it

looked like someone had taken a knife, and just sliced the top of it right off. You could see the offices – a computer still sitting on someone's desk. It was overwhelming. But we had a job to do and with support from friends and family, we all pushed forward."

Although Click went to work with the stress management team for a total of two weeks, the impact those visits made on him will last forever. "I put my boots in the very back of the closet and left them there. I bet it took me about a year before I cleaned them," Click said. He still has the ID issued to him by NYPD and often thinks about the officers he met.

Many officers did and still do not feel comfortable with the "hero" label that the rest of the world wants to put on them, Click said. "The New York police officers are not like you see on TV. They are an extremely hard-working people working in an unbelievable event with humor, with compassion, and with a strong sense of patriotism. I told them that they're not heroes for what they did on September 11. They simply were law enforcement officers given a bad set of circumstances. You are trained to act when there is a problem," he said. "I told them that what made them heroes is that they went home, took a shower, and came back on September 12. That's what makes them heroes."