

**MONITORING OF OFFENDERS REQUIRED TO
COMPLY WITH THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY
REQUIREMENTS**

**A Report to the Governor, House Appropriations Committee,
And Senate Finance Committee**



January 2021

**Colonel Gary T. Settle
Superintendent**



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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January 1, 2021

TO: The Honorable Ralph Northam, Governor of Virginia

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Chair of the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Luke E. Torian
Chair of the House Appropriations Committee

Pursuant to the 2009 Appropriation Act, I am respectfully submitting herewith, a *Report on Monitoring of Offenders Required to Comply with the Sex Offender Registry Requirements*. The report is a compilation of the Department's efforts from September 30, 2019, through September 30, 2020.

Respectfully,


Superintendent

GTS/ajp

Enclosure

**Report on Monitoring of Offenders Required to Comply with
the Sex Offender Registry Requirements**

Preface

Pursuant to the Appropriation Act, the Department of State Police is pleased to provide this report on the monitoring of offenders required to comply with the Sex Offender Registry requirements.

Creation and Staffing

The 2006 Session of the Virginia General Assembly allocated the Virginia State Police 45 sworn FTEs (full time equivalents) as an enforcement component of the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry.

In July 2006, the Sex Offender Investigative Unit (SOIU) was established, consisting of one (1) first sergeant position, four (4) sergeant positions, and forty (40) trooper positions. This unit was placed within the Criminal Justice Information Services Division, which is housed in the Bureau of Administrative and Support Services. The positions of the unit were constructed to provide an enforcement of the sex offender registry laws pursuant to Title 9.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. To ensure proper distribution of these established positions, an in-depth analysis of the existing sex offender population was conducted, resulting in the creation of four (4) regions (see page 9), with one (1) sergeant and ten (10) troopers assigned to each region. Each region is further divided into smaller geographical areas to ensure the sex offender population is properly served.

In 2006, when the SOIU was originally conceived, the offender to trooper ratio was 120:1. In the fourteen years since the implementation of the SOIU, legislative changes requiring additional types of offenders to register, coupled with the growth of the sex offender population, has pushed the ratio of sex offenders to troopers to 294:1. To further ensure efficiency, each region was divided into areas or small geographical work units to ensure that manpower was distributed evenly within each region.

Currently, the SOIU monitors, registers, re-registers, and verifies employment and residency of 11,764 sex offenders. The *2017 Manpower Augmentation Plan* staffing model recommends the Department assign one trooper per 100 sex offenders living in Virginia communities. Implementation of this staffing model would require 78 additional troopers.

Effective July 1, 2012, forty-three (43) civilian compliance officer positions within the SOIU were authorized. The positions were advertised in March, 2012 in anticipation of the newly created positions. The Department received 2,616 applications. The applicants were screened, interviewed and underwent a thorough background investigation. Twenty-four (24) compliance officers were hired on July 9, 2012. The compliance officers completed two (2) weeks of training at the Virginia State Police Academy, receiving training in eighteen (18) different topics, to include sex offender laws, methods of effective information gathering, database utilization, report writing, civil liability, ethics & leadership, and defensive tactics. Upon graduating, the compliance officers were assigned to SOIU troopers for completion of field training. An additional fifteen (15) compliance officers were hired October 15, 2012, and also completed their academy and field training.

Over the last twelve months, there has been a high level of turnover in both the compliance officer and trooper ranks. During the past twelve months there have been a total of twenty-four (24) compliance officer vacancies. The department filled sixteen (16) of those vacancies. Thirty-six (36) compliance officers are currently employed, with

the vacant positions being in Augusta, Hampton, Mecklenburg, Norfolk, Northern Neck, Richmond City, and Roanoke City duty posts. The Department is in the process of filling these positions. The compliance officers complete all required training and now attend in-service training biannually for re-certifications. They have access to all the databases necessary to adequately perform their jobs. They are issued an iPhone, small purchase credit card, and Voyager card. Additionally, they are supplied with oleoresin capsicum (pepper spray) for personal defense, a pepper spray holder, flashlight, flashlight ring, and a clipboard. They are issued laptop computers and STARS radios (purchased through a Byrne/JAG grant) which are installed in their issued vehicles. The radio provides them an added level of security, and serves as a means of communication if they are threatened or assaulted by the convicted sex offender during the course of their verification assignments.

A thorough analysis was conducted in 2012 regarding the location of registered sex offenders, resulting in a matrix for the assignment of the compliance officers based on sex offender population density. Another analysis to determine where to best position both sworn and civilian personnel is ongoing, and will be completed by the end of 2020. The compliance officers continue to conduct and complete assigned home and employment verifications; to include both the semi-annual and 30-day verifications required by statute. In addition to the verifications, they also complete the necessary reports, perform other administrative/clerical duties, and are available for court appearances and testimony. The Virginia State Police use them to complement troopers in the SOIU, with the goal of easing the verification workload of the troopers so they can focus on the criminal investigations.

By way of the 2020 General Assembly, the SOIU was tasked with investigating firearms violations stemming from private sale transactions; for which eight (8) positions were allocated. The SOIU absorbed nine (9) additional positions from field operations; to assign to high-volume firearm transaction areas. Three (3) of these positions will be for supervision and the remaining six (6) positions will be for investigators across the state; within those high-volume areas. These troopers will handle approximately 75 percent of all firearm violation investigations. If the SOIU were to convert the civilian compliance officer positions (43) into trooper positions, the troopers in the SOIU whose primary duty is investigating sex offender violations would be able to handle the remaining firearms investigations across the state (approximately 25 percent). With the growing number of sex offenders and resulting investigations, the Sex Offender / Firearms Unit is dividing into six (6) regions (see page 10) from four (4). This division of the state will more evenly distribute sex offenders and firearms cases to the appropriate personnel (assigned troopers or compliance officers), and will lessen the supervisory requirements of each sergeant.

Currently, each region of the SOIU consists of 21-23 sworn personnel and compliance officers, with no support personnel to assist with the vast quantity of paperwork. With the newly added firearms duties, and the addition of seventeen sworn positions, the current supervisory requirement is untenable. Division of current regions and the addition of three (3) sergeant positions will reduce the number of personnel assigned to each supervisor. Additionally, an Office Services Specialist (OSS) is needed in each region for clerical support of the SOIU. Currently the unit has one wage (part-time)

Office Service Specialist for the entire state. In contrast, the average BFO area office has one full time OSS per 20 troopers. In 2010 the number of offenders supervised by the Department of State Police was 6,053. In 2020, that number has grown to 11,764. Though the new positions will help address firearms investigations in the high volume areas and those resulting from private sale transactions, the number of troopers designated for sex offender investigations remains at forty (40), the same as the unit's inception in 2006. During the past year, the SOIU troopers initiated 2,809 criminal investigations. Clerical support staff is needed to allow the sergeants more time to perform case reviews and provide proper oversight.

Goals and Objectives

The overall objective of the SOIU is to enhance public safety by investigating and successfully closing criminal cases involving sex offenders who fail to comply with Title 9.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. The SOIU is committed to monitoring and prosecuting sex offenders who fail to comply with Title 9.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. The following information provides an overview of the production and progress of the SOIU.

Once the new troopers and supervisors assigned to conduct firearm violations are fully implemented, the goals and objectives will be revised.

Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry (SOR) Verifications

As of October 14, 2020, there were 24,672 sex offenders listed on the Virginia State Police Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry. They are divided into three groups: (1) 3,788 registrants under the purview of the Department of Corrections Probation and Parole Services, (2) 11,764 sex offenders whose registration and verifications are the responsibility of the Department of State Police, and (3) the remaining 9,120 registrants are civilly committed or incarcerated in jails or prisons across the state.

The Virginia Department of State Police maintains a web-based system for recording and monitoring residential and employment address verifications. This database is utilized by Virginia State Police troopers and compliance officers, as well as Department of Corrections (DOC) probation and parole officers tasked with completing the verification process. Additionally, changes to Virginia's sex offender registration laws that became effective on July 1, 2020 have streamlined the re-registration process for Tier I and II offenders, by allowing their re-registration to be completed during the semi-annual verifications.

In the past twelve months, from September 15, 2019, to September 15, 2020, VSP SOIU conducted 37,339 verifications of home, work, and school addresses. Our agency also conducts the training for the probation and parole officers, as well as the troopers and compliance officers assigned to the SOIU. A new system is currently under development and is scheduled to replace the aging sex offender verification system by September 2021.

Registry Violations

In the past twelve months, from September 15, 2019, to September 15, 2020, the Virginia State Police conducted 2,809 criminal investigations for failing to register pursuant to § 9.1-902, and providing false information pursuant to §18.2-472.1. During this same period, there were 462 convictions from arrests made across the Commonwealth by the SOIU for violations of the aforementioned offenses. Many cases are still pending trial. These investigations were initiated from troopers' observations, tips from citizens, information from other law enforcement agencies, information from the Department of Corrections, and other states' sex offender registries. The SOIU received 494 tips regarding potential registry violations through the Department's Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry website. Virtually all of them required follow-up investigation.

Coordination with Other State and Local Law Enforcement Organizations

Interagency coordination during this reporting period includes the following:

- VSP and DOC - VSP operates the Sex Offender Verification (SOV) System, which is also used by DOC. VSP continues to conduct training for both agencies.
- VSP and DOC – VSP Area Offices register or re-register each incoming sex offender and work to process offenders who are under the supervision of Probation and Parole.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, new SOR forms were created for all law enforcement agencies; that reduced the contact between persons registering and the offenders. These forms will be available until pandemic restrictions are removed.
- VSP and DOC - Offenders are monitored through joint initiatives, such as the Halloween meetings that take place at many Probation and Parole District Offices. These meetings are designed to monitor offender movement during this children's celebration of the fall season, and also educate the offenders on their registration requirements.
- VSP and DOC – In July 2020, the SOIU created a form (SP-236C) allowing Probation and Parole Offices to register offenders. The previous form only allowed Probation and Parole to notify the State Police of changes. Offenders were still required to have a law enforcement agency complete an additional form to finish the process. The use of the new form has already resulted in fewer offenders being investigated for failing to register.
- VSP and the United States Marshals Service (USMS) – VSP SOIU Regions I, II, and IV each have a trooper assigned to the USMS Task Force, which is mutually beneficial to both organizations.

- VSP and the United States Marshals Service (USMS) – VSP collaborates with the USMS to apprehend violent sex offenders at-large across the country. Once located, VSP SOIU personnel team with the local VSP BCI Fugitive Apprehension Unit to transport the fugitive back to Virginia.
- The USMS notifies the Virginia Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry whenever a Virginia registered sex offender makes reservations to travel outside the country.
- VSP conducted only two joint operations with the USMS because of concerns with Covid-19. The "Winter Roundup" and "Spring Sting" targeted a total of 60 wanted offenders, and ended with 17 arrests of those targeted. New leads were gathered on 22 of the wanted offenders.
- VSP and other states - VSP worked with numerous out-of-state registries to locate and apprehend absconders who crossed state lines to escape compliance with sex offender registration requirements. This enables the SOIU troopers and compliance officers to extend their network of contacts.
- VSP and local agencies - VSP developed small task force initiatives with local agencies across the state, with the goal of enhancing investigations surrounding SOR violations and to improve the lines of communication throughout Virginia's criminal justice system.
- VSP and local agencies – VSP collaborated with regional jails to flag offenders in order to ensure a new SP-236 is completed prior to release.
- VSP and U.S. Postal Service (USPS) – Region IV continued collaboration with USPS to address postal issues and to aid with leads during criminal investigations.
- In July 2020, legislation went into effect that provides a schedule for offenders to follow for reregistration. This will provide the offender a date range when they can expect their reregistration letter, and will make it easier for an offender to stay in compliance with registry requirements. This schedule is based on the first letter of the offender's last name.
- In-service training was completed for both SOIU Troopers and SOIU Compliance Officers. For the Compliance Officers, training consisted of: personal safety tactics and use of force, defensive driving with practical exercise, recertification of OC spray, and use of mobile fingerprint scanner. Trooper in-service consisted of: conducting basic investigations, law refresher and update, conducting firearm violation investigations, Law Enforcement Activity Management System (LEAMS) review, and overviews of the VSP High Tech Crimes Division and the United States Marshals Service.

Future Endeavors

- The Virginia State Police is in the process of replacing the current web-based Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry. Expected completion date is September 2021. The new system, also web-based, will streamline the process of registering and processing offenders assigned to the registry. The new system will better serve the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia by giving more accurate and timely information.
- VSP is in the process of filling the fourteen (14) new trooper positions and the three (3) new sergeant positions to fulfill the obligation to conduct firearm violation investigations. Anticipated completion is the fall of 2021.
- VSP received a grant to conduct statewide training for all law enforcement agencies on the new SOR system beginning September 2021. The new system will allow a nearly paperless registration process of all registered sex offenders.

Sex Offender Investigative Unit

The below data represents the time period of September 15, 2019, to September 15, 2020, and is provided to illustrate the quantity of work performed by the SOIU.

Address Verifications per Region

Region	Offenders Verified
Region One (Richmond)	9,834
Region Two (Northern VA)	8,519
Region Three (Chesapeake)	9,765
Region Four (Roanoke)	9,221
Totals	37,339

Address Verifications per Region

Region	Home Address Change	Home Initial Verification	Home Semi-Annual Verification	Work Address Change	School Address Change	Other
Region One	1,120	29	6,870	832	12	971
Region Two	788	53	6,618	788	10	262
Region Three	1,129	56	6,968	656	12	944
Region Four	992	53	7,258	698	6	214
Totals	4,029	191	27,714	2,974	40	2,391

Criminal Investigations per Region From September 15, 2019, to September 15, 2020

Location	# Cases
Region One	990
Region Two	614
Region Three	776
Region Four	429
Total	2,809

* Information derived from Virginia State Police Criminal Investigative Report File and LEAMS System.

Fail to Register Convictions by Jurisdiction 9/15/2019 - 9/15/2020

Jurisdiction	Count		
ACCOMACK CO	1	LANCASTER CO	2
ALBEMARLE CO	1	LOUDOUN CO	2
ALLEGHANY CO	4	LOUISA CO	1
AMHERST CO	3	LUNENBURG CO	2
ARLINGTON CO	1	LYNCHBURG	9
AUGUSTA CO	9	MECKLENBURG CO	1
BEDFORD CO	1	MIDDLESEX CO	2
BOTETOURT CO	2	MONTGOMERY CO	2
BRISTOL	1	NELSON CO	4
BRUNSWICK CO	2	NEWPORT NEWS	22
BUCHANAN CO	1	NORFOLK	29
BUCKINGHAM CO	2	NORTHUMBERLAND CO	3
CAMPBELL CO	6	NOTTOWAY CO	2
CAROLINE CO	1	PAGE CO	6
CHARLES CITY CO	2	PATRICK CO	1
CHARLOTTESVILLE	3	PETERSBURG	7
CHESAPEAKE	37	PITTSYLVANIA CO	2
CHESTERFIELD CO	24	PORTSMOUTH	2
COLONIAL HEIGHTS	2	POWHATAN CO	4
CULPEPER CO	2	PRINCE EDWARD CO	1
DANVILLE CO	4	PRINCE WILLIAM CO	6
DINWIDDIE CO	1	PULASKI CO	2
FAIRFAX CO	15	RICHMOND CITY	33
FAUQUIER CO	1	ROANOKE CITY	32
FLUVANNA CO	1	ROANOKE CO	8
FRANKLIN CITY	3	RUSSELL CO	4
FRANKLIN CO	2	SHENANDOAH CO	10
FREDERICK CO	6	SMYTH CO	7
FREDERICKSBURG	5	SOUTHAMPTON CO	3
GILES CO	3	SPOTSYLVANIA CO	3
GLOUCESTER CO	4	STAFFORD CO	1
GRAYSON	1	SUFFOLK	3
HALIFAX CO	1	TAZEWELL CO	2
HAMPTON	7	VIRGINIA BEACH	22
HANOVER CO	12	WARREN CO	1
HENRICO CO	27	WASHINGTON CO	2
HENRY CO	2	WAYNESBORO	3
HOPEWELL	1	WESTMORELAND CO	2
ISLE OF WIGHT CO	1	WINCHESTER CITY	5
KING GEORGE CO	1	WISE CO	2
KING WILLIAM CO	2	YORK CO	2
		Total	462

Virginia Department of State Police Sex Offender Registry (SOR) Regions

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

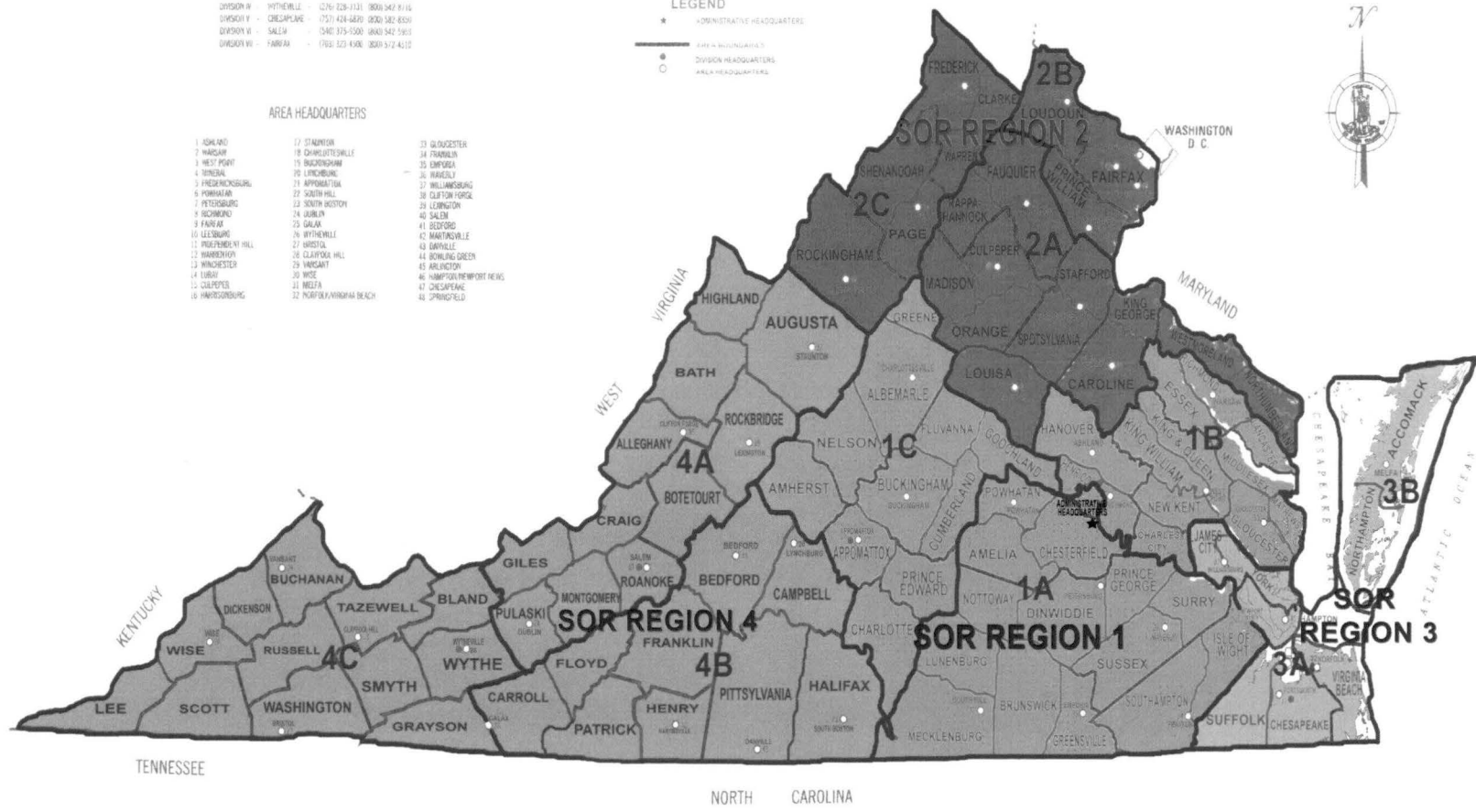
DIVISION I	RICHMOND	(804) 533-3444	(800) 552-5963
DIVISION II	COLPEPER	(540) 825-7401	(800) 522-7160
DIVISION III	SPOTTSYLVANIA	(541) 752-7129	(800) 552-6960
DIVISION IV	WYTHEVILLE	(276) 229-1111	(800) 542-8116
DIVISION V	CHESAPEAKE	(757) 424-6820	(800) 582-8391
DIVISION VI	SALEM	(540) 875-5500	(800) 542-5161
DIVISION VII	FAIRFAX	(703) 523-4300	(800) 512-4112

AREA HEADQUARTERS

1. ISLAND	17. STANTON	33. GLOUCESTER
2. HANCOCK	18. CHARLOTTESVILLE	34. FREDERICK
3. WEST POINT	19. BUCKINGHAM	35. EMERYVALE
4. TENNESSEE	20. LINCOLNBURG	36. RANGELI
5. FREDERICKSBURG	21. APPOMATTOX	37. WILLIAMSBURG
6. POMFRET	22. SOUTH HILL	38. CLIFTON FORGE
7. PETERSBURG	23. SOUTH BOSTON	39. LEONINGTON
8. ROCKWOLD	24. JORDEN	40. SALEN
9. FAYETTE	25. SALVA	41. GEORGETOWN
10. LEEBURG	26. WYTHEVILLE	42. MANTASVILLE
11. INDEPENDENT HILL	27. HERRINGTON	43. GARRVILLE
12. HARRISON	28. CLAYPOLE HILL	44. BOWLING GREEN
13. WINCHESTER	29. VANCEANT	45. ARLINGTON
14. LEBANON	30. WISE	46. HAMPSHIRE/NEWPORT NEWS
15. CLAYTON	31. MEIER	47. CHESAPEAKE
16. HARRISBURG	32. NORFOLK/VIRGINIA BEACH	48. SPRINGFIELD

LEGEND

- ★ ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS
- AREA BOUNDARIES
- DIVISION HEADQUARTERS
- AREA HEADQUARTERS



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE SOIU/FIREARMS REGIONS

