

ROCK ISLAND  
ILLINOIS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

CHIEF JEFFREY R. VENHUIZEN

2019

# *Rock Island Police Department Mission Statement*



The Rock Island Police Department is committed to enhancing the quality of life in our community by working with the citizens to enforce laws, solve problems, build partnerships, and protect individual rights. As a community policing and problem-solving agency, we hold in great regard, the trust our community bestows upon us and we take personal responsibility in nurturing and promoting that trust. Our members will always strive to set a positive example in the community by maintaining our own high ethical values.

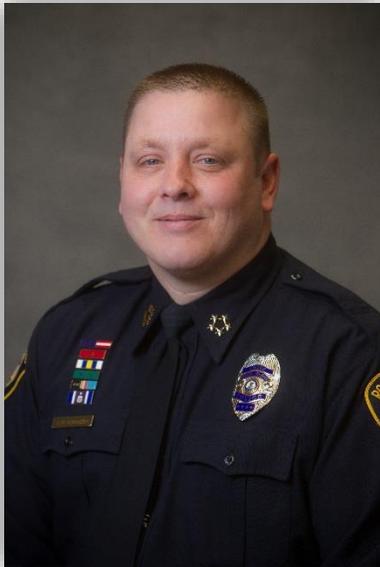
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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

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I am pleased to present to you the Rock Island Police Department's Annual Report for 2019. This report reflects our commitment to excellence and professionalism as a Tier II accredited agency through the Illinois Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (ILEAP).

It is both a pleasure and privilege to serve as the Chief of Police for this organization.

I am extremely proud of the daily efforts of all our men and women in building partnerships between the police department and the community we serve. It is through these partnerships, along with highly pro-active police forces that concentrate on problem solving, that we can reduce crime and enhance the quality of life within our community.

We hold in high regard the trust our community bestows upon us and each of us takes personal responsibility in nurturing and promoting that trust. The Rock Island Police Department will remain steadfast in our commitment to providing the best possible police services to our citizens.

- Chief Jeffrey VenHuizen

# ***POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS***

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**Greg Hass**

**CEO of Valley Construction**

**Commissioner since 2018**

**Police and Fire Commission Secretary**



**Dr. John Hildreth**

**Professor at Augustana College**

**Commissioner since 1982**

**Police and Fire Commission Chairman**



**Vanessa Trice**

**Secretary at Rock Island Primary Academy**

**Commissioner since 2012**

**Police and Fire Commission Vice Chairman**

# MAJOR STAFF

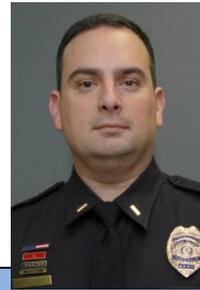
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**Deputy Chief Jason Foy**  
**Deputy Chief of Police**



**Lt. Tim McCloud**  
**Watch Commander**  
**Third Shift Patrol**



**Lt. Richard Landi**  
**Agent, Office of**  
**Professional Standards**



**Lt. Rusty Hocker**  
**Watch Commander**  
**Second Shift Patrol**



**Lt. Ben Smith**  
**Commander**  
**Technical Services**



**Lt. Larry Hufford**  
**Commander**  
**Tactical Operations**



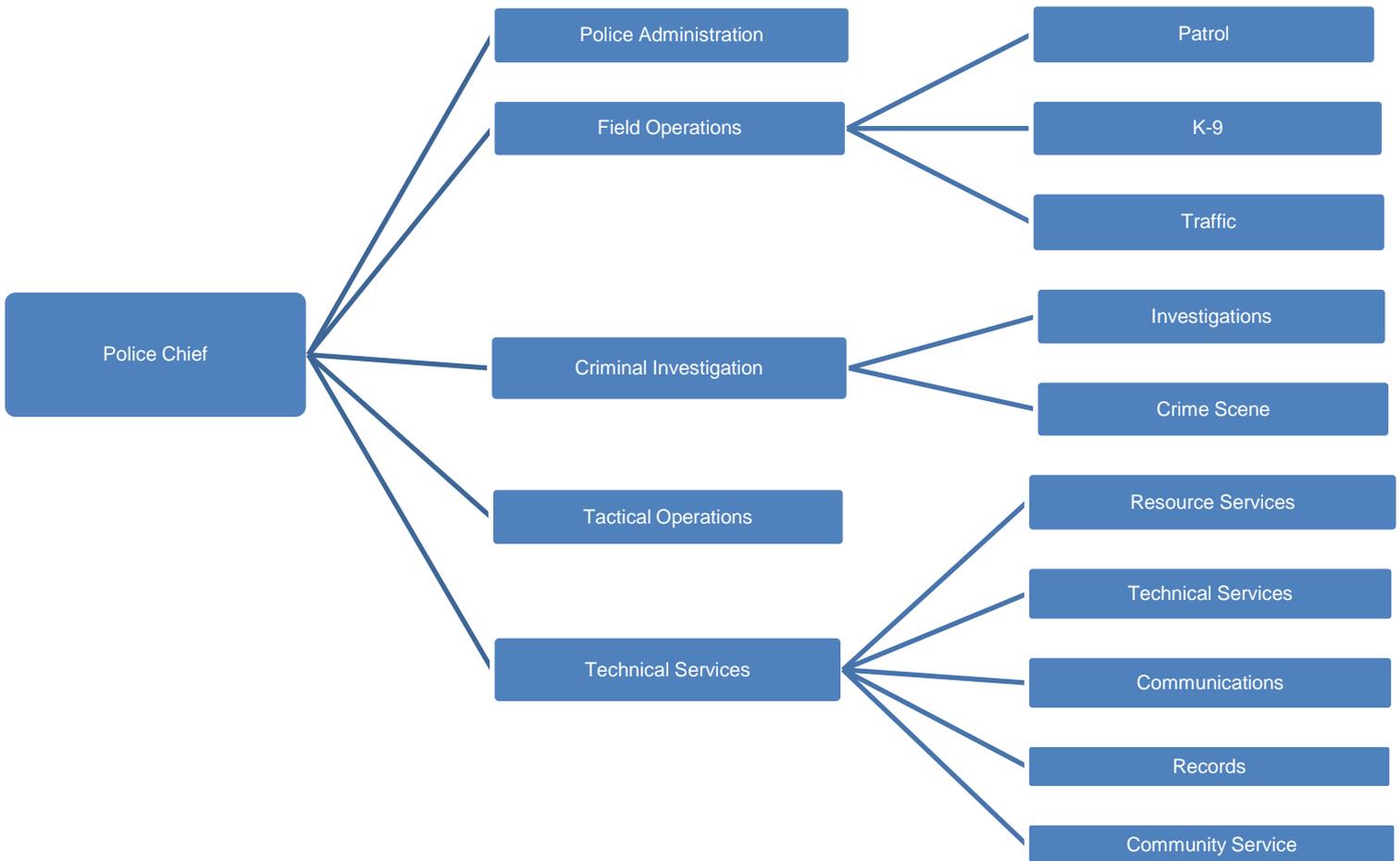
**Lt. James Morris**  
**Watch Commander**  
**First Shift Patrol**



**Lt. Shawn Slavish**  
**Commander**  
**Criminal Investigations**

# DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

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## Police Administration

The Office of the Chief of Police includes the Chief, the Deputy Chief, the Agent in the Office of Professional Standards, and the Chief's secretary. The Chief's office is responsible for the overall management and supervision of all personnel. The Office of Professional Standards is responsible for the investigation or review of all citizen or internal complaints, alcoholic beverage investigations, investigation of miscellaneous license applications and the preparation of operation orders. The Agent assigned to the Office of Professional Standards reports directly to the Chief of Police. The office of the Chief of Police also oversees research, planning and budgeting.

## Field Operations Division

Field Operations, commonly referred to as the Patrol or Uniform Division, is the essence of the police mission, these uniformed officers are the primary instrument through which the police mission is accomplished. The Patrol Officers are responsible for preserving the peace, responding to calls for service, conducting preliminary investigations, traffic control, accident investigations, crime prevention and court appearances to provide testimony in the prosecution of cases. Patrol officers perform many specialized functions to include two K-9 dogs and handlers, an Elderly Service Officer, six Field Training Officers, Traffic Specialists, and one Housing Authority Officer.

### **Emergency Response Team**

Comprised of members of all three divisions, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) is a tactical response unit whose primary responsibility is to respond to incidents or calls for service involving armed or potentially armed subjects or other high-risk situations requiring tactical equipment and training. The ERT is primarily used for dangerous situations such as search warrants or hostage/barricaded subjects and trains monthly to prepare for the many possible and unpredictable incidents that may potentially arise at any given time. Working closely with this unit are the five members trained in Hostage Negotiations.

## Criminal Investigations Division

This year, the Persons / Property Unit and the Juvenile Investigations Unit were combined into one investigations unit, with all detectives responsible for the majority of the investigative functions of the police department. CID conducts the follow-up investigation of Part I and Part II UCR offenses, including drug and gang related crimes, financial crimes, and internet related crimes. One detective is assigned as liaison with the A.T.F. to prosecute persons in conjunction with the U.S. Attorney's Office. Additionally, a criminalist is assigned to this division for crime scene processing, fingerprint comparison, and narcotics testing.

CID also is actively involved in deterring juveniles from a career in crime. Early detection and counseling may prevent many young people from maintaining a harmful lifestyle. Detectives conduct follow-up investigations on all juvenile-related crime and work closely with other agencies such as the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Rock Island County Youth Court Services. This division also has two School Resource Officers, one assigned to the Rock Island High School, the other assigned to the two Jr. High Schools, and the ten Elementary Schools.

The Criminal Investigations Division also supervises the Rock Island Police Explorer Post, a young adult education program centered around careers in law enforcement. The Explorer Program allows those interested in policing to experience hands-on learning and matches the law enforcement and career interests of young adults with the resources and adult expertise of Rock Island police officers.

As part of the continued community policing efforts, CID provides speakers to citizen groups and civic organizations and gives informative talks on a variety of topics that fall under the scope of criminal investigations. Furthermore, this division works closely with the Field Operations Division and Tactical Operations Division to conduct pro-active, preventive activities to address neighborhood concerns.

## Tactical Operations Division

Previously a unit within CID, the Tactical Operation Division was reorganized in 2018 to become its own independent division within the department. TOD is comprised of both covert and overt officers, addressing specific concerns as they arise within the community. The division is proactive in nature, utilizing creative approaches to a wide range of issues such as traffic offenses, nuisance problems, or violent crimes. Additionally, all narcotics related investigations are run through this division with a detective deputized with the local Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) task force. Officers from the Tactical Operations Division also perform regular patrol duties within the downtown business district.

## Technical Services Division

The Technical Services Division is responsible for a variety of functions including reception desk services, records management, UCR reporting, telecommunications, court services and community services. Additionally, the department budget is maintained through this division and manages billing, service contracts, equipment, and training needs.

### **Community Services**

The Animal Control Officer and the Abandoned Vehicles Officer, both civilian positions, comprise the two Community Service Officers for the department. The Animal Control Officer is responsible for controlling the animal population (stray dogs and cats) by ensuring that dogs and cats are properly licensed and have received mandatory vaccinations, as well as picking up stray dogs and cats, and processing animal complaints. The Abandoned Vehicle Officer is responsible for removing derelict vehicles from public and private property as required by city ordinances and state statutes as well as monitoring the contracted towing services. Processing of abandoned vehicles continues to be a high priority for all divisions in the police department, but it is the primary responsibility of Community Services. The Animal Control officer has also been cross-trained in abandoned vehicle procedures and assists in processing abandoned vehicles.

### **Communications**

Our Communications Center, known as RICOMM, is responsible for receiving, monitoring, transmitting and relaying calls for emergency services to appropriate public safety agencies. It is staffed by civilian employees, including one supervisor and twelve telecommunicators. The communications center operates equipment which includes emergency and non-emergency telephones and multiple radios. It also maintains computerized records of all communication transactions. The Communications Center obtains and processes confidential records and

related information used in criminal investigations and the everyday inquiries by patrol officers. Services also provided by the RICOMM supervisor include the repair and maintenance of the police department's portable radios and the collection and processing of records requested for release under the Freedom of Information Act. The Communications Center processes and provides the appropriate response for various requests for service that are received by radio and telephone for both the Police and Fire departments. 911 calls have remained very consistent over the past several years.

### **Evidence**

The Evidence Custodian, a civilian position, is responsible for custody of all evidence obtained by the department. This involves the storage, retrieval, return, destruction or auction of evidence and property when appropriate. Evidence management also includes the processing of state mandated records as required for compliance with state statutes. This includes various records and reports associated with arrests.

### **Records**

The Technical Services Division is responsible for the management of records for the entire department and the assistance of citizens contacting the front desk either in person or by telephone. Duties involve receiving reports by telephone and entering them into the computerized records management system. The division is also responsible for maintaining a central repository of reports received from the reception desk and police officers, as well as the archiving of reports, and managing requests for various reports from outside sources and members of the department. The Technical Services Division is responsible for processing arrest documents, fingerprint documents, and booking photographs (not processed through Central Booking). Additionally, this division manages all sex offender registration requirements according to state and federal standards.

### **Resource Services**

As part of Resource Services, the Court Liaison is responsible for coordinating and scheduling officers for misdemeanor and felony criminal court, traffic court, and serves as a liaison between the court, State's Attorney's office, MUNICES (Administrative Hearing Officer) and the Police Department. Another responsibility is tracking alcohol related traffic cases, reimbursement from DUI cases, and C.O.R.A. tows. The Deputy Commander of the Technical Services Division coordinates academy training and in-service training and is responsible for continually monitoring the needs of the department and staying up-to-date on changes needed in training programs.

# UNIFORM CRIME REPORT STATISTICS

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The Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (I-UCR) mandates Illinois law enforcement agencies to report the occurrence of selected offenses and arrests with ten Index Crime categories listed in the table below. These categories, known as Part I offenses, are considered serious by their nature or volume. Prior to 2014, there were eight categories, with Human Trafficking - Commercial Sex Acts and Human Trafficking - Involuntary Servitude added in 2014.

Offense	2018	2019
Homicide	1	1
Sexual Assault	4	14
Aggravated Assault	81	95
<b>Violent Crime Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>110</b>
Burglary	166	166
Theft	688	599
Motor Vehicle Theft	134	114
Robbery	19	29
Arson	9	5
Human Trafficking	0	0
<b>Property Crime Total</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>913</b>

## *USE OF FORCE*

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The Rock Island Police Department recognizes and respects the value and integrity of each human life. Investing police officers with the lawful authority to use force to protect the public welfare, a careful balancing of all human interests is required. Therefore, it is the policy of the Rock Island Police Department that police officers shall use only that force which is reasonably necessary to defend themselves or others from bodily harm and in conformity with the statutes and Constitutions of the State of Illinois and the United States. All uses of force are documented. When a use of force meets a specific threshold as defined by policy, it is investigated by a supervisor and reviewed by the Office of Professional Standards to ensure the force used was in compliance with departmental and legal standards. These investigations help to identify trends in use of force incidents and evaluate the effectiveness of equipment, techniques, and training of personnel.

In 2019, a total of 52 incidents were recorded which involved employees using a level of force. It should be noted that at times, some incidents involve more than one use of force, depending upon the needs of call.

Incidents involving uses of force are categorized into six categories: Open-Hand/Control Tactics, Strikes/Punches, OC Pepper Spray, Taser, Pointing a Firearm, and Discharging a Firearm. There were six incidents involving open-hand or control tactics reported in 2019, and eight incidents involving strikes or punches. There were ten incidents involving the use of OC-pepper spray and eleven incidents involving the use of the Taser. There were 24 incidents involving pointing a firearm, and there were zero use of force incidents involving the discharge of a firearm in 2019. There were four incidents in which an officer reported receiving an injury while involved in a use of force.

# *OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS*

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It is essential that the public maintains confidence in the department's ability to investigate and properly adjudicate any complaints made against its members. Additionally, the department has the responsibility to seek out and discipline those whose conduct discredits the department or impairs its effective operation. The rights of the employee as well as the public must be preserved, and any investigation or hearing arising from a complaint must be conducted in an open and fair manner with the truth as its primary objective. The department accepts complaints against its members and fully investigates all such complaints to the appropriate disposition.

After the investigation into a complaint is completed, each complaint receives one of five possible dispositions: Unfounded, Administratively Closed, Not-Sustained, Sustained, or Exonerated. These dispositions are described below:

**UNFOUNDED:** The allegation is false or not factual.

**ADMINISTRATIVELY CLOSED:** The complainant refused to cooperate with the investigation and no further investigation can be completed.

**NOT SUSTAINED:** There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation.

**SUSTAINED:** The allegation is supported by sufficient evidence.

**EXONERATED:** The incident occurred but the action taken by the accused member was lawful and proper.

In 2019, 25 complaints were received through the Office of Professional Standards with twelve complaints received by citizens and thirteen complaints being generated internally by a supervisor. Five were determined to be Unfounded, zero were Administratively Closed, zero were Not-Sustained, ten were Sustained, and ten were Exonerated.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

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## Chaplain Program

Created in 2002, the Chaplain Program is an integral part of the Department's Employee Assistance Program and provides department members and their families with access to clergy from the religious community.

Police Chaplains are volunteer members of the department who not only are available to assist members of the department, but also with the community in a variety of situations in which a religious counselor would be of benefit. Examples of these situations could include death notifications, serious injury notifications, intra-family crisis situations, or for families of those who have committed suicide.

The Rock Island police chaplain is also available to counsel with youth of the community and their families at their request as well as to console and comfort victims and relatives in community disasters.

The Rock Island Police Department currently has two Police Chaplains; Pastor Donald Johnson, and Pastor Robert Griffin.

## Honor Guard

Formed in 1965, the Rock Island Police Department was the second police department in the State of Illinois to have a Police Honor Guard. The Honor Guard's primary responsibility is to honor the lives of the fallen officers at funerals and memorial services but also to represent the Rock Island Police Department in official functions such as parades, the Quad City Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial, and the annual Officer and Firefighter of the Year Dinner.



## Badges for Books



The Rock Island Police Department recognizes how important early reading is to childhood development and that kids who are proficient readers by the end of third grade are more likely to graduate from high school and to be economically successful in adulthood. Studies show that 80% of fourth-graders from low-income families and 66% of all fourth-graders are not reading at grade level.

Given the critical nature of reading to children's individual achievement, the Rock Island Police Department began the Badges for Books Program to support early reading.

Children in kindergarten through sixth grade can take any book they'd like in our lobby lending library, and it's theirs to keep or borrow and return.

And if kids want to show us what they've learned and write up a one-page book report on the book they've read, we'll send them a gift certificate for free Whitey's Ice Cream.

## Cops and Firefighters for Christmas

Every year the Rock Island Police and Fire Departments team up at Christmas time to help provide needy kids with Christmas presents.

Children are partnered with our officers, firefighters, and other volunteers so that those less fortunate can still have a joyous holiday. After a day of holiday shopping, the kids are treated to a full meal at the police department, catered by Hy-Vee and provided by the Rock Island Police Benevolent and Protective Association.



## Social Media



The Rock Island Police Department recognizes the every-changing and impactful influence of social media in our world today. Using social media such as Facebook and Twitter as a platform to better interact and communicate with the citizens of Rock Island and surrounding communities, we have found that it has been an invaluable tool for community outreach, problem solving, investigation, and crime prevention. Every week we get new people liking and following our pages which only strengthens our ability to directly connect with those we serve.



## Catholic Care Packs

Police officers are often the first persons to come in contact with our community's less fortunate and homeless population. We recognize that as first responders, our mission "to protect and serve" can be carried out in many ways, so this year the Rock Island Police Department teamed up with local Catholic Parishes in the Catholic Care Packs program. Backpacks are filled with donated hats, gloves, and toiletries and then provided to the department, who often times have direct contact with people roaming the streets in the cold.



Officers are typically assigned to a specific area of town, and have the opportunity to get to know the homeless in their beats. The Catholic Care Packs program not only provides the homeless with the basic necessities many of us take for granted, but it gives officers the opportunity to directly interact with and help a segment of our society that often gets overlooked.

## Cop on a Rooftop

Cop on a Rooftop has been a long-standing partnership between local law enforcement agencies, Dunkin' Donuts, and the Special Olympics. Police officers in Rock Island and across the nation participate in this annual event which raises money for the Law Enforcement Torch Run and the Special Olympics. Guests to Dunkin' Donuts were given the opportunity to support this wonderful cause and get a free donut with every donation.

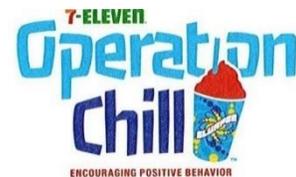


## “Operation Chill”



This year the Rock Island Police Department partnered with 7-Eleven with “Operation Chill”, a community relations program designed to reduce crime and enhance relations between police and youth. The program allows officers to “ticket” kids who are caught in the act of doing good deeds or exhibiting positive behavior. The “ticket” is actually a coupon good for a free small

Slurpee at any participating 7-Eleven store. “Operation Chill” was a great opportunity for the youth in our community to see a different side of police officers other than just being crime fighters.



# Retirements



Sergeant Matt Edwards retired in February of 2019 after 28 years of service.



Lt. Dan Knittle retired in February of 2019 after 29 years of service.



Lt. Tim Steines retired in August of 2019 after 28 years of service.