

ROCK ISLAND  
ILLINOIS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

CHIEF JEFFREY R. VENHUIZEN

2020

# *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 2020. 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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**Dr. John Hildreth**

**Commissioner since 1982**

**Police and Fire Commission Chairman**



**John Wright**

**Commissioner since 2020**

**Police and Fire Commission Vice Chairman**



**Greg Hass**

**Commissioner Since 2018**

**Police and Fire Commission Secretary**

# MAJOR STAFF

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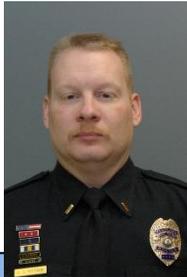
**Deputy Chief Richard Landi**  
**Deputy Chief of Police**



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



**Lt. Ben Smith**  
**Watch Commander**  
**Second Shift Patrol**



**Lt. Kirk Pattison**  
**Watch Commander**  
**Third Shift Patrol**



**Lt. James Morris**  
**Commander**  
**Technical Services**



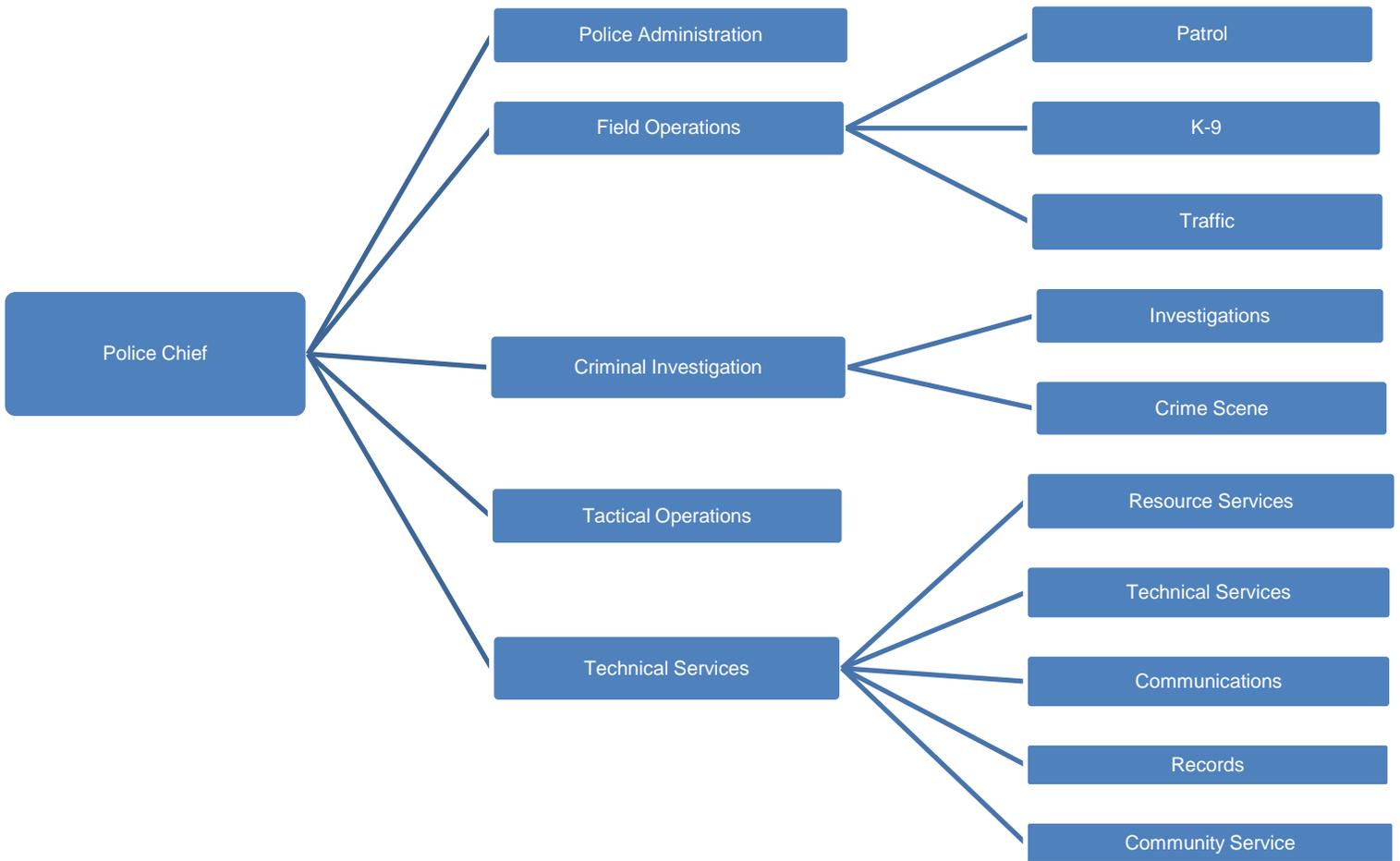
**Lt. Larry Hufford**  
**Commander**  
**Tactical Operations**



**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. Due to staffing shortages, the positions of Elderly Service Officer and Housing Authority Officer remain vacant.

### **Emergency Response Team**

Comprised of members from all four 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

The Criminal Investigations Division staffs detectives who are 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, ballistics, 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. Historically, CID 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, however due to staffing shortages and the limits associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, these two positions remain vacant.

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. Unfortunately, the Explorer Post has been temporarily suspended until after the COVID-19 pandemic is resolved.

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

The Tactical Operation Division 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, and an officer deputized through the Federal Gang 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. At present, the Court Liaison position remains vacant.

## 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	2019	2020
Homicide	1	7
Sexual Assault	14	8
Aggravated Assault	95	139
<b>Violent Crime Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>154</b>
Burglary	166	146
Theft	599	732
Motor Vehicle Theft	114	133
Robbery	29	27
Arson	5	24
Human Trafficking	0	0
<b>Property Crime Total</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>1,062</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 2020, a total of 39 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 the 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 two incidents involving open-hand or control tactics reported in 2020, and two incidents involving strikes or punches. There were nine incidents involving the use of OC-pepper spray and eight incidents involving the use of the Taser. There were 22 incidents involving pointing a firearm, and there were six use of force incidents involving the discharge of a firearm in 2020. 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 2020, 35 complaints were received through the Office of Professional Standards with 17 complaints received by citizens and 18 complaints being generated internally by a supervisor. Three were determined to be Unfounded, one was Administratively Closed, three were Not-Sustained, 18 were Sustained, and 10 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.



## Social Media



The Rock Island Police Department recognizes the ever-changing and impactful influence of social media in our world today. Using Facebook 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 page which only strengthens our ability to directly connect with those we serve.

## Retirements



Officer Pat Richter retired in January of 2020 after 30 years of service.



Det. Richard Moritz retired in January of 2020 after 29 years of service.



Det. Chad Sowards retired in January of 2020 after 21 years of service.

Lt. Rusty Hocker retired in March of 2020 after 27 years of service.



Telecommunicator Beth Hoffeditz retired in April of 2020 after 31 years of service.



Telecommunicator Patricia Harris retired in April of 2020 after 31 years of service.



RICOMM Communications Supervisor Wayne Sharer retired in September of 2020 after 41 years of service.



Court Liaison Officer Doug Sullivan retired in October of 2020 after 40 years of service.



Telecommunicator Julie Sullivan retired in October of 2020 after 35 years of service.





Deputy Chief Jason Foy retired in October of 2020 after 30 years of service.



Officer Doug Williams retired in October of 2020 after 20 years of service.