

Abingdon Police Department 2014 Annual Report

Our Commitment:

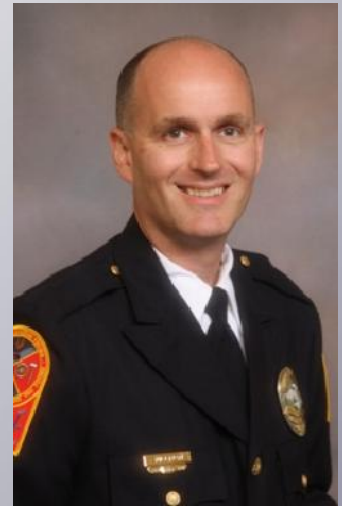
A
*p*rofessional *ccountable*
*D*edicated

Table of Contents

Message from Chief of Police	Page 3
Department Overview	Page 4-7
Department Personnel News	Page 8-10
Training	Page 11
Organizational Improvements	Page 12
School Resource Officers	Page 13
Community Relations	Page 14
Special Events	Page 15
Special Enforcement Functions	Page 16
Incidents	Page 17
Patrol Functions	Page 18
Arrests	Page 19
Traffic Information	Page 20-22
Parking Citations	Page 23

Police Chief's Message

The Annual Report for 2014 reflects the outstanding dedication and service that the members of our organization provide every day. The Abingdon Police Department serves our citizens in many ways, on many different levels. From patrolling the community to educational programs for children, our members constantly strive to be “Accountable, Professional and Dedicated.”



As an agency, our primary goal is effective policing through the efficient use of our resources. During this difficult economic environment, we remain focused on delivering quality service and a safe community.

When a criminal perpetrates a crime in the Town of Abingdon we resolve it 63.6% of the time a figure well above the state and national average for law enforcement agencies. It is also a testament to the dedication and focus of the members of this agency.

I invite you to review our accomplishments in 2014. I hope that this information will provide you with valuable understanding on the amount and types of activities that the department handles. In an effort to provide you with key information concerning the department and its enforcement actions, this document details actions reported and initiated by the police department in 2014. It also includes data from the years 2003 – 2013 for comparative purposes.

Finally, it is a pleasure to serve as your Chief of Police, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Abingdon, alongside such dedicated and outstanding staff.

Organizational Beliefs

Department Goals

1. Ensure that the rights of all persons are protected.
2. Treat all persons fairly and honestly regardless of sex, race, age, religion, national origin or handicapped status.
3. Identify and investigate criminal activities.
4. Apprehend those violating state and local laws.
5. Form partnerships with citizens to provide for a safe community.
6. Enhance the community's confidence in the Department.
7. Strive to prevent crimes.
8. Promote motor vehicle and pedestrian safety.
9. Provide a vehicle for non-criminal services needed by the community and a management environment that facilitates achieving the Department's goals.



Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Abingdon Police Department to create affirmatively a feeling of safety and security in every contact.

The Department exists for the purposes of safeguarding lives, property, and maintaining order in a professional manner that preserves confidence in our democratic process.



Department Values

Members of the Abingdon Police Department believe in serving the community with the utmost professionalism and integrity.

The Department will foster teamwork and dedication among its members and will treat all community members fairly. All members will abide by these values under which this Department operates.

Our Department



The Abingdon Police Department consists of twenty-six sworn officers and four civilian employees. The department is comprised of three divisions: patrol, investigations, and administration. In addition, the Department contains several specialized units, which include: crash reconstruction, arson investigations, accreditation, school resource, code enforcement, and community relations.

The 2014-15 operating budget for the Department is \$1,950,704. This amount comprises 9.93% of the overall budget of \$19,652,421 for the Town of Abingdon.

2014 Police Department Budget



■ Remaining Town Budget

■ Police Department Budget



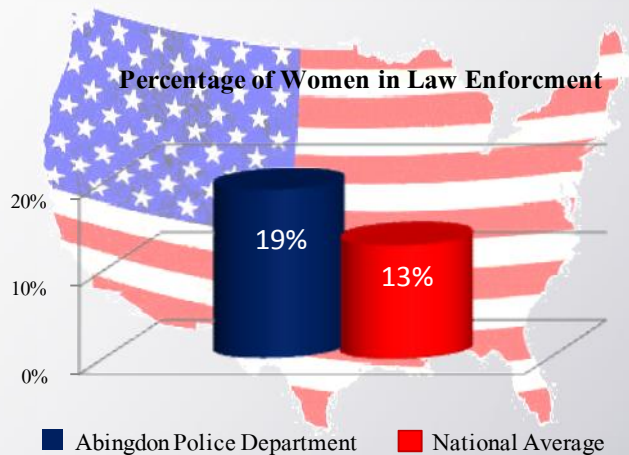
Service Area

The Town of Abingdon is the county seat of Washington County, located in Southwestern Virginia. It is bordered to the south by Interstate 81 and is bisected by US 11, US 19, and US 58. The Town is situated approximately 17 miles from the Tennessee State Line.

The Town has a population of 8,206 (2013) and covers a land area of 8.3 miles.



Department Personnel



Agency Demographics:

Total

Employees: 29 full-time, 1 Part-time
 26 sworn , 4 civilian
 21 Men, 9 Women

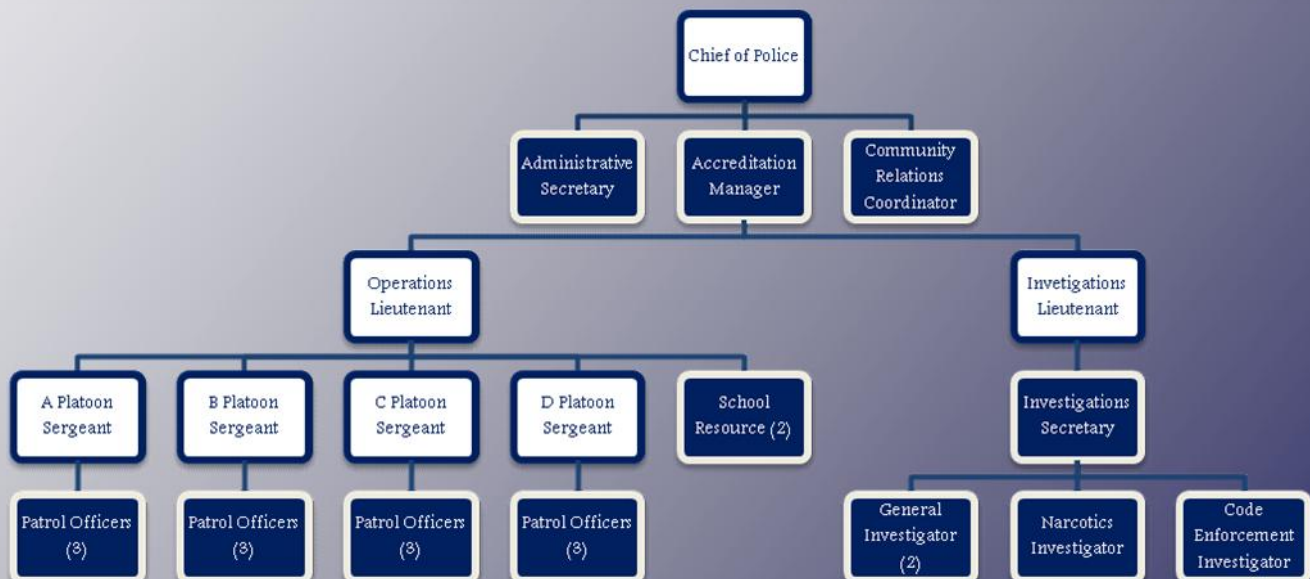
Sworn

Employees: 21 Men, 5 Women (19%)
 69% have at least a 2 yr. degree
 46% have at least a B.A. or B.S.
 19% have graduate work or a graduate certificate
 15% have military experience

Average

Experience: 12 yrs. 6 mos.

Department Organization



Department Personnel News

Recognition/Awards

- The Department was recognized for its seatbelt enforcement efforts by the Virginia "Click it or Ticket Campaign." In September, we received an award for the "Most Improved Seat Belt Use" at the 2014 VA Law Enforcement Symposium in South Boston, VA. Officer Jon Holbrook spearheads the Department's enforcement efforts and accepted the award on behalf of the agency.



- In September, Officer John Carty was recognized by the Regional Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) chapter for his efforts in removing intoxicated drivers from the roadways. This is the second year in a row in which John has received this honor.



Retirements

Ms. Linda Lawson retired from the Department in 2014. She served as the Department Records Clerk for more than twenty-seven (27) years.



Linda was recognized for her service at a Town Council meeting, where she was presented with several gifts by Town Manager Greg Kelly. We are grateful for the service and dedication of Ms. Lawson. We wish her the best in her retirement.

Department Personnel News

Promotions and Assignments

- Officer Craig Weaver was promoted to the rank of Patrol Sergeant on July 1, 2014. Sergeant Weaver has over sixteen years of service with the Department and is the supervisor of “D” Platoon. Sergeant Weaver is a very knowledgeable veteran of the department and he will make a great supervisor.



- Ms. Angela Sullins was assigned to the Investigative Division to serve as the Investigations Secretary. In her new role, Ms. Sullins will provide record keeping, filling and transcription services for the division. In addition, Ms. Sullins will serve as the Evidence Custodian. Ms. Sullins has been employed with the Department for over thirty (30) years and previously served as the Administrative Secretary.

- Ms. Tenille Montgomery joined the Department as the Community Relations Coordinator. Previously, Ms. Montgomery was employed by the Town of Abingdon Convention and Visitors' Bureau. In her new role, Ms. Montgomery is responsible for the Department's social media pages and serves as the Public Information Officer for the Town. In addition, Ms. Montgomery coordinates community outreach activities for the Department.



Department Personnel News

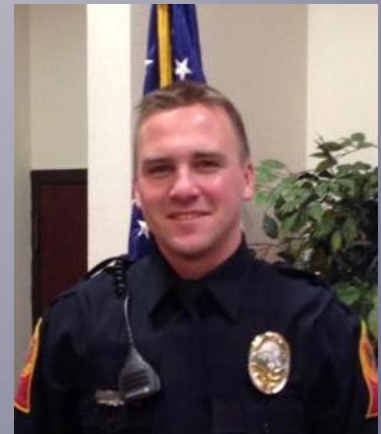
New Hires

In 2014, the Department filled vacancies for three Police Officers and an Administrative Secretary.



- Officer Kayla Richardson is a graduate of Bluefield College and completed Basic Law Enforcement Training as a Senior at Bluefield College. She earned her State Certification after completing Emergency Vehicle Operations and Agency Field Training.

- Officer Andrew Mehl is in his final year at King University and completed his Basic Law Enforcement Training in December. He will earn his State Certification upon completion of Agency Field Training.



- Officer Yancey Wilmoth is an Emory and Henry College graduate and completed her Basic Law Enforcement Training in December. She will earn her State Certification upon completion of Agency Field Training.

- Ms. Johnice Knight joined the agency in November as the Administrative Secretary. Ms. Knight brings years of experience in administrative roles and has worked in both the public and private sectors.



Training

During 2014, Abingdon Police Department members attended training courses ranging from basic and in-service training to specialized courses out of state. In total, the Department received 2,176 hours of training.

Training classes completed include:

Active Shooter Instructor	Advanced Driver Training
Basic Law Enforcement Training	Breath Test Operator Re-certification
Campus Safety	Campus Threat Assessment Training
Interview and Interrogation	Law Enforcement In-Service
Meth. Lab First Responder	Response to Homemade Explosive Devices
Professional Leadership Academy	Public Information Officer Training – FEMA
Response to Bombs and Explosive Devices	Risk Management
School Threat Assessments	Social Media Investigations
Standardized Field Sobriety	

Abingdon Police Department members also provided training to other agencies through our association with the Southwest Criminal Justice Training Academy. To instruct at the academy, officers must successfully complete an instructor training program and internship developed by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Fourteen (14) officers with the Department are certified instructors. Department instructors provided 596 hours of instruction to the regional law enforcement community in a variety of topics, including:

Active Shooter Response	Arrest Procedures	Basic Law
Crash Investigations	Crime Scene Investigations	Driver Training
Drug Recognition	DUI Detection	Ethics
Evidence Handling	Firearms	Gangs
Hazardous Materials	Impact Weapons	Juvenile Law
Low Light Tactics	Missing Persons	Prisoner Transport
RADAR	Report Writing	Traffic Control
Traffic Stops	Training the Adult Student	Use of Force
Vehicle Operations		

Organizational Improvements

In 2014, the Department undertook an initiative to enhance officer safety by transitioning from a ballistic vest worn under the shirt to an external ballistic vest carrier that looks like a regular uniform shirt. This allows the officers to wear their ballistic vests as an outer garment, as opposed to wearing the vest under a regular duty shirt. This change has several advantages:

- It requires the officers to wear a ballistic vest. The uniform will not fit without the external vest carrier.
- The vest can be accessed and removed quickly should the officer need medical attention. Previously, the vest would need to be cut away, along with the outer duty shirt, to render medical attention.
- The external vest provides greater comfort.

In addition, new vests were purchased to replace those that had been in use longer than five years. The new vests are safer and have a better ballistic rating.



The department also made great strides in public notifications through the use of social media and access to public information sources. The addition of a Community Relations Coordinator has added a new facet of information sharing for the Department, as well as other agencies in the town. Traditionally, having staff available to speak with media representatives, or post an alert on social media, had to wait until the tasks associated with the event were complete. Now, we are able to provide information and releases much faster, thus providing valuable information to the public. In addition the department is able to use social media to assist in investigations, provide alerts concerning crimes, and to post crime prevention tips.

Please "like" us on



www.facebook.com/AbingdonPoliceDepartment

Please follow us on



www.twitter.com/AbingdonPD

School Resource Officers

The Abingdon Police Department is fortunate to have School Resource Officers in E.B. Stanley Middle School and Abingdon High School. The role of the officers is to assist the school and the school system by providing law enforcement resources, security, and consultations enabling the school to operate with minimal disruption. The officers are placed in the schools through a cooperative agreement between the Abingdon Police Department and Washington County Schools.

While the officers primary responsibility is to provide a visible law enforcement presence, they occasionally act upon crimes and suspicious activities that occur on public school campuses.

In 2014, the School Resource Officer at Abingdon High School mitigated twelve (12) complaints on campus:

- Child in Need of Services 1
- Tobacco Offense 6
- Weapon on School Property 1
- Possession of Marijuana 3
- Underage Possession of Alcohol 1

During the same period of time, the Resource Officer at E.B. Stanley Middle School was involved in the resolution of twenty-seven (27) complaints on campus:

- Social Services Referral 7
- Tobacco Offense 8
- Assault Complaint 4
- Weapon on School Property 1
- Larceny 2
- Property Lost/Found 1
- Assist other Agencies 1
- Custody Issue 2
- Welfare Check 1



Officer Allen Hay



Officer Adam Heath

Community Relations

The Department is continually looking for opportunities to become involved in community events. In 2014, the members of the agency participated in many local and regional programs and events, to familiarize themselves with the community. Those events include:

- G.R.E.A.T. Camp (Gang Resistance Education and Training) – Bedford, Va.
- Read Across America Day – High Point Elementary School
- Officer Appreciation Day – Abingdon Christian Academy
- Boy Scout Troop Tours of the Abingdon Police Department
- Girl Scout Troop Presentation – Watauga Elementary
- Safety Presentations – Coomes Recreation Center Summer Camp
- Virginia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run – Main Street
- Career Carnival for 8th Grade Students – Virginia Highlands Community College
- Mother & Child Expo – Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
- Investigations Presentations – Neff Center Criminal Justice Class



For the past three years, the Department has maintained a working relationship with Emory & Henry College to host senior students as interns. This relationship has been successful and extremely beneficial. The first intern as a part of this program was Yancey Wilmoth, who we hired as a patrol officer in May. The second intern, Josh Settlemyer, is now a North Carolina State Trooper. Our most recent intern, Leroy Strickland, is working locally, while training to pursue athletic opportunities at the professional level.

Special Events and Overtime

Throughout the year, we assist other agencies and town departments with events and activities. Included is a partial list of special event activities that required department resources in 2014:

- Abingdon High School Basketball (10)
- Abingdon High School Football (5)
- Abingdon High School Graduation
- Abingdon High School Orientation
- Abingdon High School Prom
- Blues Festival
- Cruisin' Classic Car Show
- E.B. Stanley Orientation
- Earth Day
- Halloween Patrol
- Hops and Howlers Beer Festival
- July 4th - Fireworks
- Kiwanis Christmas Parade
- March of Dimes Fundraiser Security
- Martin Luther King Jr. March
- Plumb Alley Day
- Shamrock 4-Miler
- Shrine Parade
- Thursday Night Jams (12)
- Virginia Highlands Festival Music Events (7)
- Virginia Highlands Festival Security
- Washington County Fair Parade
- Washington County Fair Traffic Detail

Agency participation in these events required 753.5 hours of overtime to be paid to the officers. This does not include the hours of salaried employees or investigators assigned to work these events as part of their regular duty.

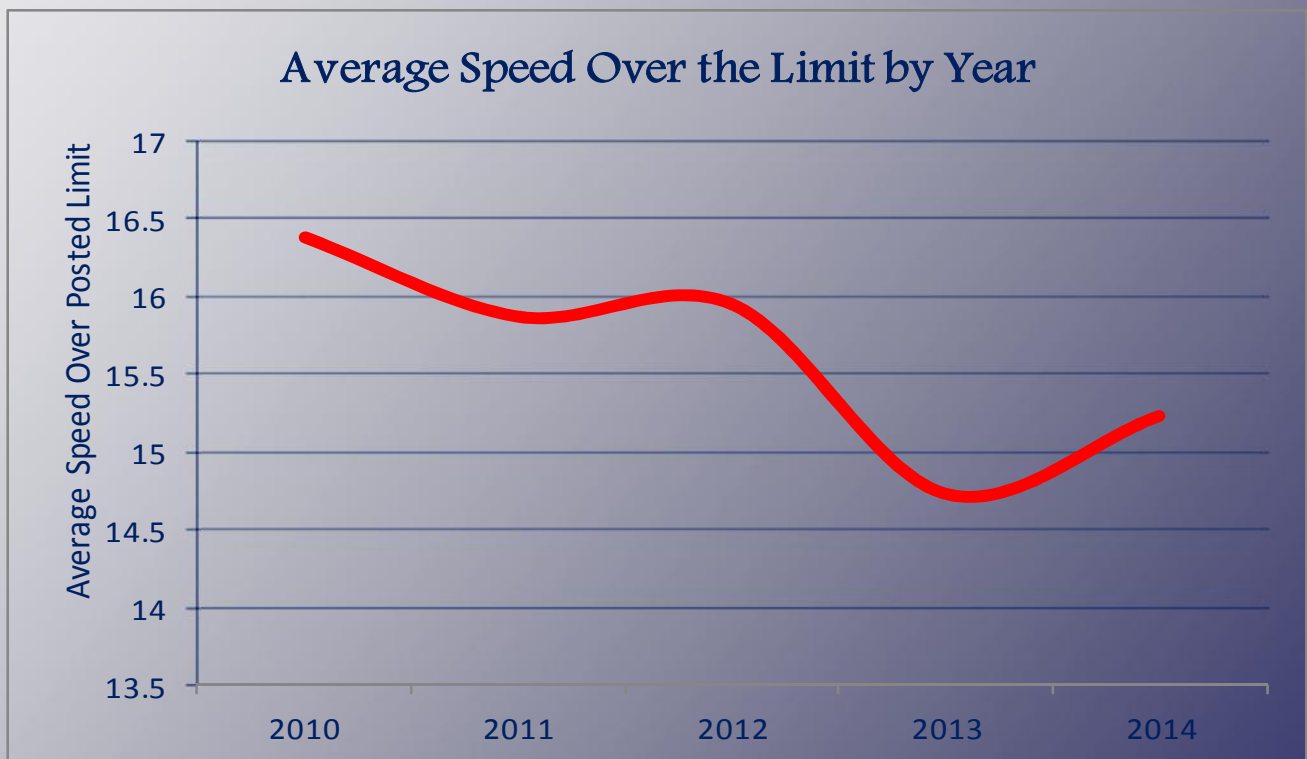


Special Enforcement Functions

During 2014, the Abingdon Police Department participated in a grant program funded by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. The goal of this program is to reduce traffic crashes through saturation patrols and increased traffic enforcement. The program allows participating agencies to use grant funds to pay officers, at an overtime rate, for enforcement actions that occur outside of regularly scheduled patrol shifts. Further, the program targets locations that are prone to traffic crashes due to factors such as speed, volume and visibility.



Ten different officers participated in this program, working 442.5 hours of overtime under this grant, resulting in 322 vehicles stops. These officers issued 322 traffic citations and 60 warnings for traffic violations. There were 261 citations issued for speed violations, 52 for other violations, and 8 for failure to wear a seatbelt. In addition, one person was arrested due to a traffic stop under this program.



Incidents/Calls for Service

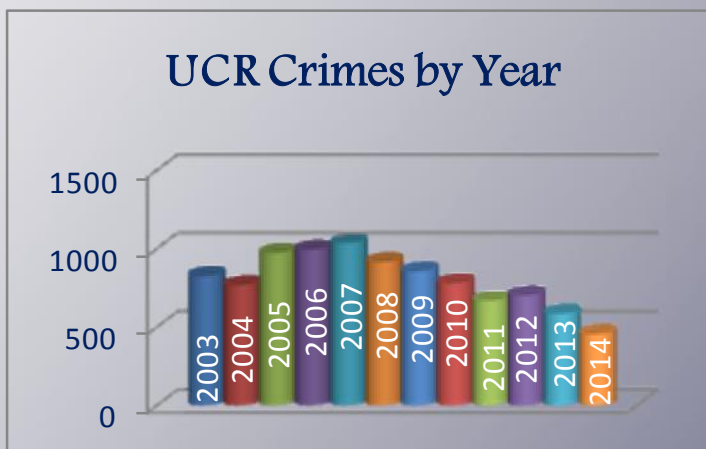
In 2014, the department responded to 4,084 incidents (calls). These calls were resolved in the following methods:

- 3,333 incidents were cleared because they were service calls, there was not enough evidence to proceed with criminal charges, the victim refused to cooperate, or an arrest was made.
- 240 incidents remained active at the conclusion of the year.
- 54 incidents were unfounded, meaning that what was reported did not actually occur, or there was some form of miscommunication between what the complainant observed and what was actually taking place upon arrival of the officer.
- 723 adults and 18 juveniles were arrested as a result of these incidents.

The department's total incident clearance rate for 2014 was 94.1%. In 2013, the department responded to 4,230 incidents. This is a decrease in call volume of 3.51 percent.



Of the 4,084 reported incidents, 462 were Uniform Crime Reportable (UBR) offenses, meaning that these crimes are tracked and classified by the F.B.I. to formulate the yearly Uniform Crime



Report. Of the 462 IBR Reportable Offenses, the department cleared 294 by arrest, refusal of the victim to cooperate, lack of evidence to proceed, or refusal of the Commonwealth to prosecute. This left 168 active IBR cases at the conclusion of 2014. This resulted in a clearance rate of 63.6% for IBR Reportable Offenses in 2014. By comparison, our IBR clearance rate in 2013 was 56.08%.

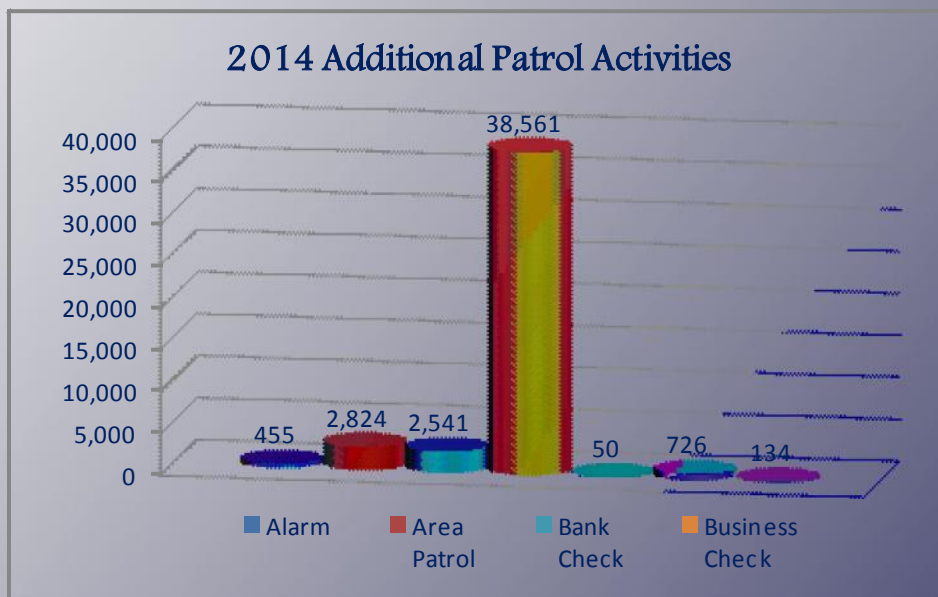
The number of IBR Reportable Offenses in 2014 represents a 25.16 percent decrease in the number of IBR Crimes reported in 2013, when we responded to 595 IBR Crimes.

Patrol Functions

The Patrol Officers of the Abingdon Police Department are critical to the success of providing a safe community. The Patrol Division consists of the majority of officers in the department. The division is separated into four platoons with four officers per platoon. Each platoon is supervised by a Sergeant. The officers work in 12 hour shifts and provide 24 hours of coverage seven days a week. Routine patrol tasks include:

- Responding to calls for service and complaints.
- Investigating and enforcing various violations of criminal and traffic laws.
- Investigating suspicious activities or persons, and disturbances.
- Serving warrants, making lawful arrests, and mitigating physical confrontations.
- Testifying in court.
- Preparing detailed reports.
- Directing traffic.
- Performing other police related assignments.

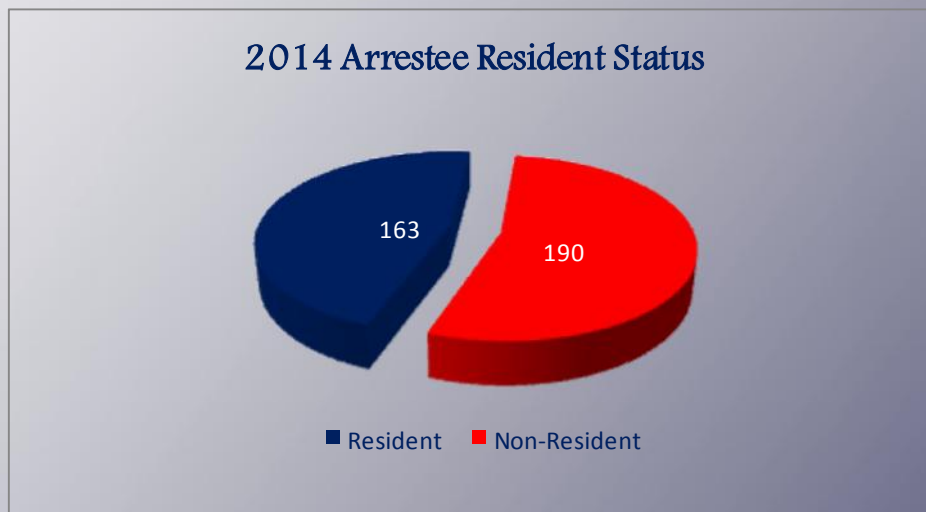
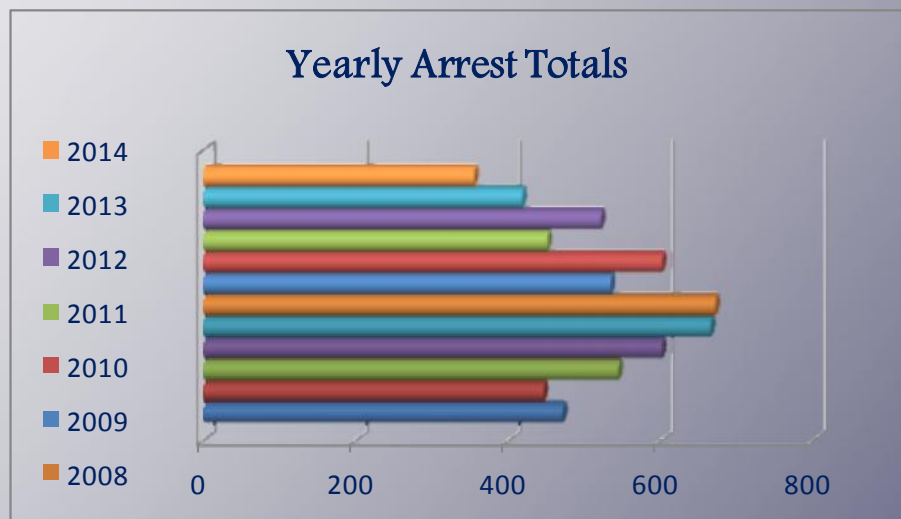
In addition to the routine tasks listed, the Patrol Officers complete numerous other assignments to help ensure safety and increase the quality of life for residents and visitors in Abingdon. These activities included alarms, area patrols, bank checks, business checks, funeral escorts, school patrols and welfare checks. The statistics on these non-routine activities are illustrated below.



Arrests

In 2014, the department arrested 353 people and charged them with 405 criminal charges. This is a decrease of 16.38% over the 416 people arrested in 2013. Of the 353 arrests,

- 326 were adults
- 27 were juveniles
- 163 were residents of Abingdon
- 190 resided outside of the Abingdon town limits



Traffic Citations

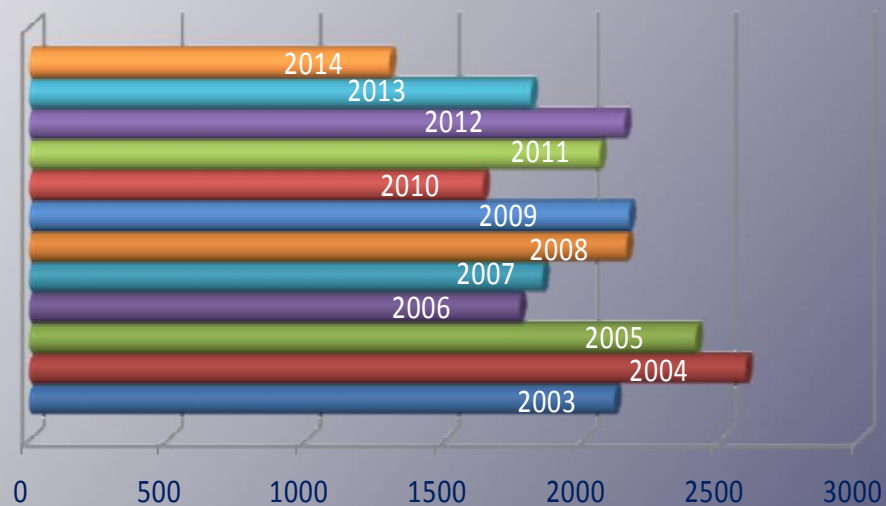


In 2014, officers of the department issued 1,297 citations to the motoring public. This is 511 fewer than were issued in 2013. Of the 1,297 citations issued in 2014; 119 were as a result of traffic crashes. The remaining 1,178 citations were issued for a variety of infractions, the most common of which were:

- 414 for speed violations
- 158 inspection violations
- 84 were related to failure to register/expired registration
- 75 related to expired/no operator license
- 24 were related to faulty/defective equipment.

The average speed over the limit per speed violation in 2014 was 15.23. This is an increase from the 14.73 miles per hour over the limit recorded in 2013. The goal remains to reduce the average speed over the limit to less than 15 miles per hour, in order to prevent traffic crashes by raising awareness that officers consistently monitor speed in Abingdon.

Citation Totals by Year



Traffic Crashes

In 2014 the department responded to 323 traffic crashes. This figure represents an increase of 16.77% in the number of traffic crashes over the same period in 2013.

As the chart indicates, nine streets within the town account for the majority of traffic crashes. In 2014, approximately 74% of all crashes occurred on one of the nine (9) streets. This is down slightly from 2013 when 78% of all crashes occurred on one of the nine (9) streets.

The primary cause of crashes within the town is driver inattention, meaning that the driver momentarily diverts attention from the road, resulting in a crash. As with previous years, the injury rate, as related to crashes is still quite low. This is attributed primarily to the low speeds at which most crashes occur.



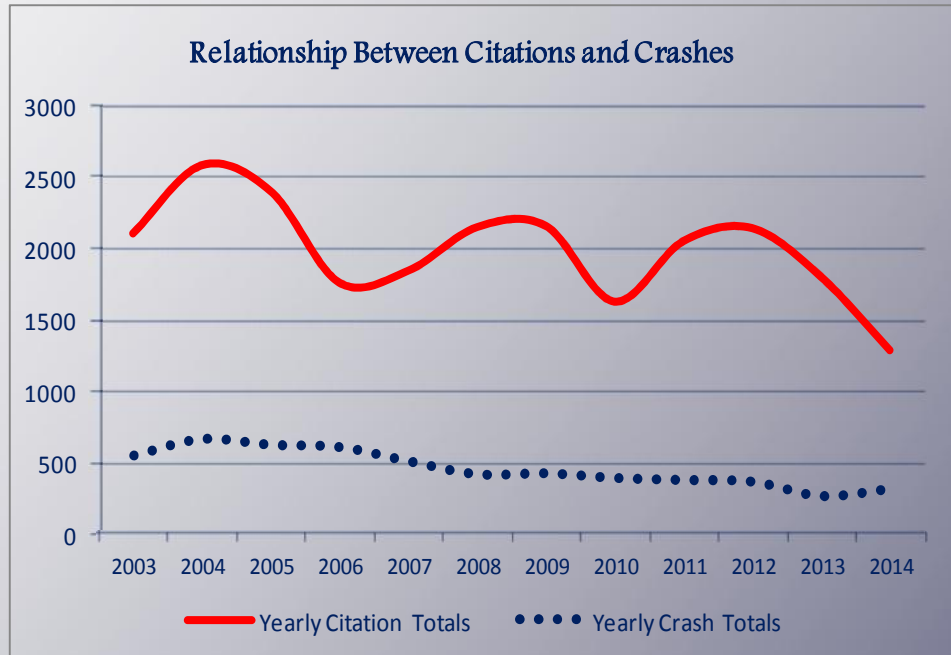
Crash Statistics

Location	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cook Street	3	8	4	4	5	3	4
Cummings Street	85	67	70	76	50	54	53
East Main Street	59	61	64	56	64	54	49
East Valley Street	3	7	11	7	8	4	6
Jonesboro Road	24	21	19	20	21	25	15
Porterfield Highway	22	18	18	12	15	9	23
Russell Road	11	5	16	11	11	4	4
West Main Street	94	66	81	93	76	57	79
West Valley Street	6	6	10	5	3	3	6
Other Streets	117	171	103	100	119	60	84
Totals	424	430	396	384	372	273	323

Relationship Between Traffic Citations and Traffic Crashes

Overall, the number of citations is very low this year. This is due, primarily, to the loss of three officers in 2013-14. As reflected in the department crash statistics, the lower number of citations in 2014 correlates to the

increase in the number of traffic crashes. While not scientific, there is a noticeable correlation between the presence of blue lights and the reduction of traffic crashes. Consistent traffic enforcement trains motorists to reduce speeds and focus on driving



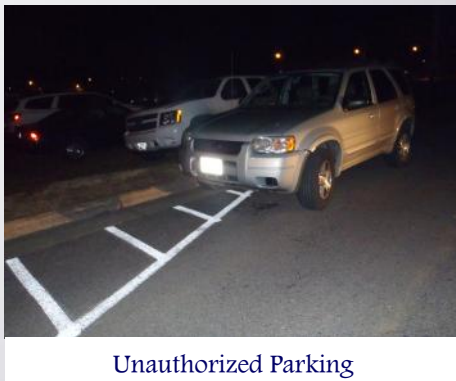
behavior where they last observed blue lights. A single motorist stopped by an officer has an impact upon the future driving actions of every driver who passes for the duration of the traffic stop.



Parking Violations

Parking enforcement in municipal settings is always a challenge. If enforcement is too ridged, it can discourage participation in activities that occur in sections of town that rely upon public parking. If not enforced strictly enough, free parking areas will not have spaces available for visitors who are trying to visit briefly. In 2014, the largest parking enforcement issues were parking “Left Side to Curb,” parking in a “No Parking” zone, and “Overtime Parking.”

Parking issues are about changing behavior. In 2015, the department will continue to focus on the most dangerous parking behavior, “Left Side to Curb.” Our goal is to discourage driving across travel lanes to park facing the wrong direction, and to prohibit them from darting across travel lanes to get in the flow of traffic from a parked position. By concentrating on this type of violation, we increase awareness of how vehicles should park downtown.



Unauthorized Parking



Parking Left Side to Curb



“No Parking” Zone

Parking Ticket Totals By Violation

Violation	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Bus Stop	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Block Driveway	2	3	1	0	0	2	0
Handicap	18	31	15	29	11	10	16
In Alley	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Left Side to Curb	57	54	25	101	99	63	44
Loading Zone	0	1	0	4	2	2	3
No Parking	24	18	38	62	35	39	31
On Sidewalk	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Other	5	4	0	15	28	8	8
Overtime	62	69	13	101	47	1	24
Traffic Lane	2	0	2	1	2	0	3
Unauthorized Parking	7	20	0	3	1	0	0
Total	181	201	97	316	225	125	129

