

# Department of Public Safety Trains 126 Village Policemen

By DICK NORTH

The village police training program was initiated in 1971 by the Alaska Department of Public Safety. Funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Act, 126 village policemen and 29 magistrates have received training over the last two years at schools held by Department of Public Safety personnel aided by persons from the court system, Public Defender, and Department of Law. Eighty-two villages now have policemen with some degree of training.

Results of the first two years operation of the program have been encouraging. They show a definite trend in reducing the amount of cases which would have necessitated the services of a state trooper. In 1972, village policemen handled ten felony cases, 418 misdemeanors, and numerous noncriminal complaints.

Seven of the felonies and 128 of the misdemeanors resulted in court action. One hundred fifty-one of the misdemeanors were handled by village councils, and one hundred thirty-nine were resolved by village policemen without court action.

Alaska State Troopers visit the many villages which have a trained policeman. In Bethel, Corporal Lorn Campbell and Trooper Paul Bartlett patrol a 90,000 square mile area containing 56 villages. They average one trooper per 9,000 residents.

A typical day for troopers in Bethel may see them cover an aggregate of 700 miles by plane and 40 or 50 by snow machine. One such day occurred recently when Trooper Paul Bartlett flew to Quinhagak and talked with village policemen John Mark.

Next he flew to Eek where he conferred with Joshua White and Walter Brown. Sam Carter, who is a PEP employee and a graduate of the advanced village police training school in Sitka, and Frank Brown, who is also a village policeman, were out hunting.

Peter Carter translated for Bartlett in his conversations concerning the village. Bartlett said he would attend a council meeting in the near future.

From Eek, Bartlett flew to Tuntutuliak where he met village policeman Paul Andrews. Andrews informed the trooper that



TROOPER PAUL BARTLETT talks with village policemen Edward George and Tony Phillips at Kwigillingok.

a girl had been bitten by a dog the day before and flown to Bethel.

Next stop was Kongigook where village policemen Tommy Mute and James Lewis, and Dick Kionia, council president met the plane. They were having the usual problems of snow machine speeding and loose dogs over six months old.

Last stop before Bethel was Kwigillingok where Bartlett talked with village policemen Edward George and Tony Phillips. Bartlett returned to Bethel at 5 p.m. Corporal Lorn Campbell returned about the same time from a flight to Grayling and Shageluk concerning several thefts.

The troopers ate dinner and then climbed into snowmachines for a trip to a village council meeting being held that night in Napakiak. Trip was about 20 miles and took about 40 minutes.

The meeting started at 8:00 p.m. Corporal Lorn Campbell and Trooper Paul Bartlett sat at the head table with village policeman James Willie, council president Wassilie B. Evan, and council members. Corporal Campbell introduced himself. He pointed out that village policemen are selected by the

village councils, and that Alaska State Troopers give assistance to them by backing them up when needed.

Corporal Campbell said that problems in the bush could be handled two ways. The offender could be sentenced by the village council or he could be sentenced by the magistrate or district judge.

The State Trooper said there were advantages in the council's handling local offenders themselves. It keeps the offender in his own village; it saves on paper work; it reduces trans-

portation costs; and lessens the inconvenience to all concerned.

Campbell added that in many cases the village council will better understand a situation involving an offender than a court outside of the village.

Corporal Campbell and Trooper Bartlett answered questions from the people until the council meeting was over. The two men did not get home to Bethel until 1:00 a.m. and they still had reports to fill out.

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