

## **Report of the Police Department 2010**

The year 2010 presented a considerable challenge to our organization that we have not experienced since I took over as police chief in the year 2000. That challenge was to keep up with the increased demands placed on our police department by a depressed economy, while at the same time experiencing a considerable amount of turnover in the work force. Since February of 2010 we have been operating at a work force level less 3-4 sworn police officers. This lack of work force includes the deployment of one police officer to Afghanistan on April 4, of 2010. He is expected to return to full duty from the military on or around June 1, 2011. Although turnover reveals an advantage to the department as it pertains to the budget, this trend has certainly kept the remaining eight officers on the department extremely busy.

Maintaining the services expected by the residents, and keeping up with the crime trends caused by a poor economy down this many officers has been a challenge, but it appears that the department has done well in doing so based on the recent survey conducted by the Capital Improvement Committee. I need to take this opportunity to congratulate the remaining eight officers for maintaining the residents' positive opinion of the organization during a time where we are hiring and training new police officers. There is a bright light at the end of the tunnel, where along with the officer returning from a military deployment, we have two new officers graduating from the police academy on April 8. One of these officers will go solo duty as soon as she is out of the academy, and the second officer still has seven weeks of field training to complete prior to being released for solo duty. The remaining open position has been advertised for, but if the proposals the Governor has made relative to Retirement System are signed as law, it is a possibility the police department may not be able to fill this position based on the Budget Committee Proposed Budget for 2011-2012.

Based on the personnel levels mentioned above, I am pleased with the activity in certain categories in 2010 compared to 2009. In 2010 the overall calls for service increased from 9,538 to 9900 (+3.6%) At the same time total number of Vehicle Accidents increased from 133 in 2009, to 150 in 2010 (+11%). Some of these Vehicle Accidents revealed more severe injuries sustained, but we were fortunate enough to make it through another calendar year with no Fatal Vehicle Accidents. Overall Motor Vehicle Stops were down considerably in 2010 decreasing from 2827 in 2009, to 1835 in 2010 (-46%). This data does not include the motorcycle and traffic checkpoints that will be added later in this report. Investigative cases in 2010 were down slightly from 573 in 2009 to 566 (-1.2%) in 2010. Although there are not always arrests made in these investigative cases, many times there is substantial time put into investigating them by our Detective, or by the Patrol Division. It is important to residents and non-residents that we continue to approach investigative cases in this manner in order to make sure that victims of crime are well represented. Of course it is also important that when someone has been accused and the reported event does not meet the definition of a crime, then we clear the names of those accused as well. In the arrests category where the arrests in 2009 totaled 248, we



saw a decrease with the total arrests in 2010 being 173 (-30 %). Slightly more than half of these arrests (53%) were on view arrests during the commission of a crime, such as operating after suspension, Driving While Impaired, and in two cases case finding three suspects committing the crime of theft from motor vehicles, and the burglary of a business on Lafayette Road. The remainder of these arrests of the incident based/warrant type which requires a great deal of investigation time before an arrest can be made.

Over the years as police chief, I have strived to answer the concerns of the residents of North Hampton as much as possible, based on the constitutional ability to do so, and also based on the budget and staffing of the police department. One of the issues that approximately half of a Survey Sample of North Hampton residents have raised, are concerns the problem of loud motorcycle exhaust. At the 2009 Polls the Legislative Body approved Article 26 on the Ballot, which is an Ordinance attempting to curb the problem of excessively loud motorcycles. Although this ordinance was passed, it was my opinion prior to passage that it was illegal based on the mere fact it pre-empts the noise levels allowed by State Statute (106 db), and that it was based on a Federal Law that the State nor the Municipalities in the State had no authority to enforce. The Rockingham County Attorney, Town Counsel, Counsel from the Local Government Center, and the EPA Office in Boston backed up the opinion that this Ordinance is not enforceable, so the police department has taken the position that it will not be enforced. Future decisions on the enforcement of this ordinance will be made based on the decisions made in the Rockingham County Superior Court.

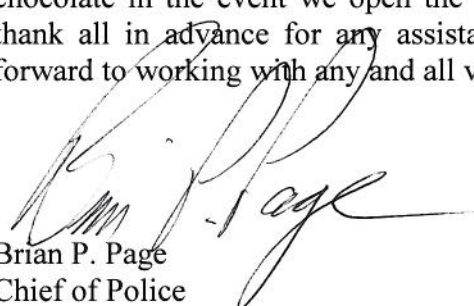
Based on the unenforceable status of this ordinance, this police department has taken a very assertive position in dedicating resources to the enforcement of the State Statute(s) involving the equipment on motorcycles, and of course the allowable decibel levels for motorcycle exhaust. On Sunday August 22, 2010 between 10:50 am and 3:00 pm the Rye Police, Hampton Police, Troop-G of the New Hampshire State Police, and the North Hampton Police conducted Mutual Aid Motorcycle and Traffic Enforcement Checkpoints on the Seacoast. Every motorcycle the officers encountered was voluntarily tested, or was put through mandatory testing based on individual circumstances. At the end of this collaborative effort, there were a total of 28 Motorcycles stopped, resulting in the issuance of five Summons and two Defective Equipment Tags. Of the five summons issued, three were for Uninspected Motorcycles, one was for Failure to Properly Display Registration Requirements, and one for Exceeding Motorcycle Decibel limits. The two Defective Equipment Tags issued were both for Failing to Maintain the Decibel Limits (Inspection Requirements) of a Motorcycle Exhaust.

On Saturday September 18, 2010 between 11:15 am and 1:40 pm the Rye Police, Troop-G of the New Hampshire State Police, and the North Hampton Police conducted Mutual Aid Motorcycle and Traffic Enforcement Checkpoints on the Seacoast. Every motorcycle the officers encountered was voluntarily tested, or was put through mandatory testing based on individual circumstances. At the end of this collaborative effort, there were a total of 66 Motorcycles stopped, resulting in the issuance of one Summons, three Defective Equipment Tags, and 14 Warnings for assorted M/V Violations. Of the 66

Motorcycles stopped, 13 were over the acceptable decibel limit of 106 decibels pursuant New Hampshire Law.

Additional Mutual Aid Motorcycle and Traffic Enforcement Checkpoints were organized by other local police chiefs and me in Hampton, Rye, Portsmouth, and Newcastle over the summer 2010 season resulting in the enforcement of an array of motor vehicle laws under New Hampshire Statutes. It is my intention as the Chief Executive Officer of your police department to continue these types of enforcement checkpoints as much as possible, in order to keep the rumble of the pipes as quiet as the law allows me to. I would also urge the concerned residents of North Hampton to contact your State Representatives and Senators and convince them to draft and support Legislative Bills for laws that would give New Hampshire Police Departments the legal authority to enforce the type of noise restrictions that were placed in the unenforceable ordinance in 2009. Prior to leaving office, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law for the State of California, what I believe to be an enforceable state statute that silences the motorcycle exhaust to EPA Standards (83 db). The article in American Motorcyclist Magazine outlining this law in California can be obtained from my office as an Adobe document for any citizen who desires to read it.

As always, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of North Hampton for their never-ending support, and also to remind them to call us if they see anything they consider dangerous or suspicious. This is more important than ever during the type of recessed economy we are currently experiencing. The success of any police agency relies greatly on the eyes and ears of the public, so please do not hesitate to call and make us aware of your concerns. In addition, I will take this opportunity to ask that any resident who wishes to be put on a volunteer list for hosting at an Emergency Warming Center should call us at the police department to leave your name and telephone number. These types of volunteers would be asked to provide light refreshments, coffee, and hot chocolate in the event we open the Warming Center at the North Hampton School. I thank all in advance for any assistance you can give us with this mission, and look forward to working with any and all volunteers.



Brian P. Page  
Chief of Police