

The Ashland Police Department has become the 25th law enforcement agency in the Commonwealth to become internationally accredited.

At a regular meeting of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) in Atlanta March 12th through the 16th, the Ashland Police Department met with members of the commission to review the on-site inspection that took place last fall. From September 29, to October 2, 2007, every facet of the Ashland Police Department was inspected to determine the agency's compliance with internationally accepted law enforcement professional standards.

This assessment was conducted by three independent assessors from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement, Inc. (CALEA). The team found the department to be in 100% compliance with all 291 mandatory standards applicable to their function, and in compliance with 96.4% of the optional standards. The agency only had to meet 80% of the optional standards.

The review Commissioners were impressed with the success of the inspection and noted that it was one of the most positive reports they had reviewed. Commissioner John Glover, a retired assistant director of the FBI commented on the agency's efforts to surpass expectations. *"Usually, agencies on their initial accreditation on meet the minimum level of optional standards (80%), but your agency far exceeded that by meeting nearly all of the optional standards,"* said Dr. Glover. Commissioner Richard Holden, the retired Superintendent of the North Carolina Highway patrol noted that the agency's efforts to increase traffic safety through enforcement and public education were commendable.

Commissioner James Robey, a state senator from Maryland was complimentary of the support the agency received from the governing body and the citizens of the town. *"It is heartwarming to see such support from the community and the elected officials,"* Senator Robey said.

Chief Tom Clark gave credit for the successful journey to become accredited to the men and women of the department saying, *"We have dedicated people who demonstrate their pride daily, and without each one of their individual contributions to this process, we would not have been successful. We are also very grateful to a community and town council who support our efforts."*

Town Manager Charles Hartgrove, who also attended the review meeting, echoed the sentiment expressed by the review committee saying, *"Our entire community is proud of the accomplishments of this agency."*

The process of law enforcement accreditation is continuous. The department will be up for review in 2010 to ensure that it is in compliance with all applicable standards. Currently, just fewer than 600 agencies have earned this status within the United States,

Canada, and Mexico. The Ashland Police Department now ranks within the top 1½ % of all law enforcement agencies.

Of special note, the Ashland Police Department is the smallest police department in the Commonwealth to earn this distinction.

On April 15th from 5:30 until 6:30 / 6:45 there will be a reception held in the APD training room for all personnel and the public before the presentation of our accreditation certificate at the Town Council meeting. Please attend if you are available.