

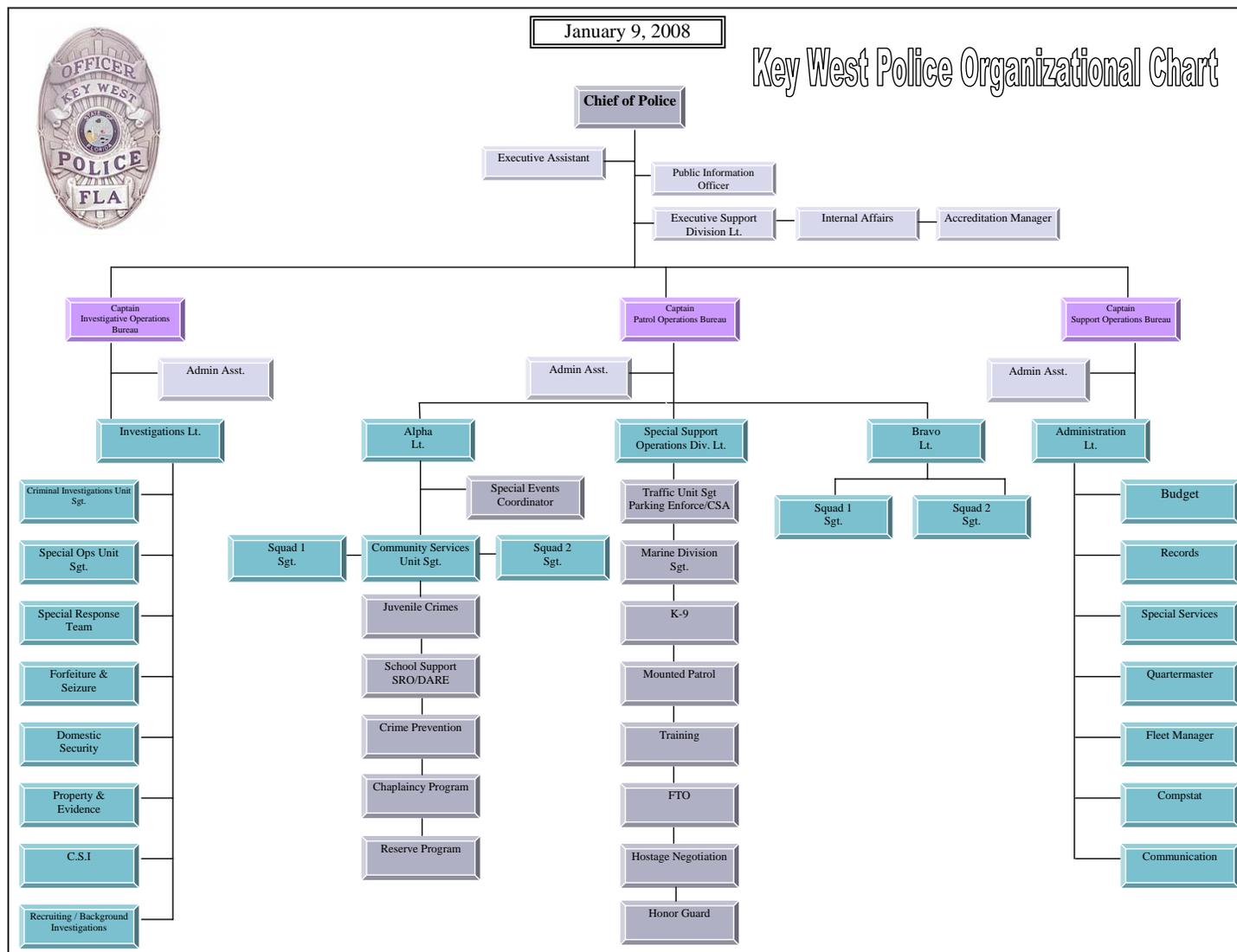
KEY WEST POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Protecting Paradise

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Department restructures to fit city's needs



KEY WEST — The KWPD announced a new restructuring of the department this month.

The new organizational chart, as shown above, was created to streamline the department's efficiency and enhance its abilities to deliver better service to the community.

A Special Support Operations Division has been created to include

all of the department's specialty units, such as the Marine Patrol, the K-9 Unit and the Mounted Patrol. Lt. Jim Benkoczy, formerly in charge of Internal Affairs, will head up this unit, which falls under the Patrol Operations Bureau.

IA and Accreditation will now be under the leadership of Lt. David Smith in the new

Executive Support Division, reporting directly to the Chief.

The department's Youth Division will be expanded into the Community Services Unit so that it can broaden its scope to encompass family matters and community policing as well as focusing on the youth in this community.

Other departmental

changes include assigning a background investigator to the Criminal Investigations Unit to assist detectives in criminal investigations during recruiting downtime, and moving the Compstat program and dispatch under the control of Cpt. Frank Sauer in the Support Operations Bureau.

"I am continually

assessing the needs of the department and the community, with the goal of providing more efficient and effective service," said Chief Bill Mauldin. "I have made these changes in keeping with that goal, and think they will have a significant impact on how we operate as a department."

The changes took effect Jan. 21, 2008. □

Fallen officers remembered in Mass



Photos by Christie Phillips

The Key West Police Department hosted the Mass of Remembrance and Blessing this month at St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Church to honor those officers that we have lost in the line of duty.

The memorial specifically celebrated the life of fallen officer John Michael Piskator, who passed away while jogging with the department's Special Response Team, on the two-year anniversary of his death.

Monroe County Sheriff's Office Deputy Robin Tanner was also remembered. Dep. Tanner was responding to a call when she died in a car crash on Dec. 13, 2007.

Members of the Key West Police Department and Monroe County Sheriff's Office were in attendance, and the names of all the fallen city and county officers and deputies were read at the ceremony.

The memorial was followed by a procession to the Key West Cemetery.



Officers increase enforcement of bicycle laws

KEY WEST — The Key West Police Department has announced that its road patrol officers have started diligently enforcing bicycle laws within the city limits.

This new bicycle campaign is not meant to punish violators, but to educate them on proper bicycle safety. But after due warning, citations will be issued.

“Bicyclists should be aware that they are required to follow a lot of the same traffic laws as other vehicles do,” said Patrol Operations Captain Donie Lee.

“They have to obey stop signs and traffic control devices. Also, a bicyclist can be arrested with driving under the influence on a bike.”

Another important bike law entails that bicyclists can’t ride the wrong way down a one-way street unless they ride on the sidewalk.

If a bicyclist chooses to ride on the sidewalk, down a one-way street or regular two-way street, he or she must yield the right of way to pedestrians and must give an audible signal or warning that he or she wants to pass a pedestrian when approaching someone who is on foot.

Bicyclists are also always required to have lights on their bikes at

night. This law is especially important for the safety of the bicyclist as it is very difficult to see someone on a bike at night without proper lighting.

A white light visible from at least 500 feet must be on the front of the bike, and from the back, a red light must be visible from at least 600 feet.

For more information about bicycle safety laws or the Key West Police Department’s new enforcement efforts, contact Capt. Donie Lee at 305-809-1013. □

New Crime Analyst brings experience

KEY WEST — Donna Halstead joined the department last month as the KWPD’s new Crime Analyst and director of CompStat.

Halstead brings over six years of crime analysis experience to the department. In all, she has worked in law enforcement for over 12 years, starting out as a Communications Operator before moving into her current career field.

“I can’t imagine being in a different profession,” Halstead said. “I love what I do and am still amazed that I was able to find a job in my chosen career field down here in Key West.”

Halstead moved from Aventura, Florida, to be closer to her mom, who lives in Big Pine.

“Aventura is extremely similar to Key West in many ways,” Halstead



Donna Halstead

said. “It is 3.2 square miles surrounded by the Intercoastal on one side and railroad tracks on the other, so it has that kind of island mentality.”

“And the Aventura Police Department has about the same number of officers as the Key West Police Department does.”

Halstead has taken over the department’s bi-weekly CompStat process and sees great potential in the program.

“I’m excited to see where our records management system can go,” she said.

“I want to advance CompStat so that each unit runs more effectively and therefore the entire department will run more effectively, and I think the way to do that is to take our records management system to the next level.” □



Officer & Civilian of the 4th Quarter

Above, Communications Administrator Jessica Strader and Detective Randy Smith receive checks from Barret and Company owners Javier Garrido, far left, and Steve Robbins, second to right, in recognition of being awarded Civilian and Officer of the 4th Quarter, respectively.

Jessica Strader has been a telecommunicator in the Key West Police, Fire and Rescue Dispatch Center since 2003. In her time as the Communications Administrator, the department has been routinely understaffed in her department, yet Jessica has continually exceeded expectations for her position.

Det. Smith joined the KWPD as a road patrol officer in 2005 after spending six years investigating fraud as an insurance investigator. Since 2005, Det. Smith has served as a bike patrol officer and is currently the Assistant Team Leader on the KWPD Dive Team. Also pictured at left is Chief Bill Mauldin and at far right is Captain Donie Lee.