Red Flag

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2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Report from the Superintendent and The Special Programs Administrator



Colonel W. Steven Flaherty Superintendent Virginia State Police



Lieutenant Verlan R. Hall, Jr. Special Programs Administrator Virginia State Police

Victories, both large and small, made 2010 another successful year for the Virginia State Police (VSP) Insurance Fraud Program (IFP), which continues to make significant strides against the crime of insurance fraud.

The greatest victory of 2010 was the Red Flag: Investigation and Prosecution of Insurance Fraud training. This five-day training session brought together IFP special agents, special investigation units from insurance companies and commonwealth's attorneys. Funded by the VSP Insurance Fraud Program, the training provided team building activities as well as the opportunity to gain more knowledge about the role each of the disciplines plays in investigating, arresting and prosecuting the crime of insurance fraud.

As was emphasized in the training, the impact of insurance fraud can be felt on all levels of both the Virginia and U.S. economies. With the exception of tax evasion, no other white collar crime robs Virginians more than insurance fraud. Since the IFP was established in 1999, the insurance industry, law enforcement and private citizens have submitted more than 17,000 notifications of suspected insurance fraud to the IFP.

Insurance Fraud special agents opened 425 cases in 2010 and made 196 arrests for insurance fraud and

other related offenses. Over the 12 years the program has been operating, 3,863 fraud investigations have been undertaken, and agents have made a total of 1,854 arrests for insurance fraud and related offenses. In 2010, more than 150 cases were presented to the commonwealth's attorneys, an increase of almost 14 percent; and 132 cases made it to court, a 21 percent increase for 2010.

The IFP received 2,095 notifications in 2010, which is a slight increase over 2009. More than 1,700 of those notifications were received through the secure reporting system on the IFP Web site, StampOutFraud.com.

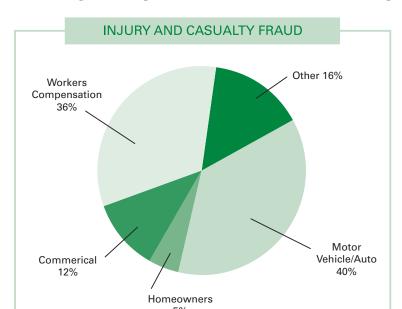
As required by Virginia law, the VSP investigates suspected fraud in property and casualty lines of insurance, as well as suspected workers' compensation fraud. The 2010 statistics show 1,282 property fraud-related notifications were received by the IFP. Notifications involving injury and casualty fraud totaled 678. Of those 678 notifications, 183 were for fraudulent workers' compensation claims.

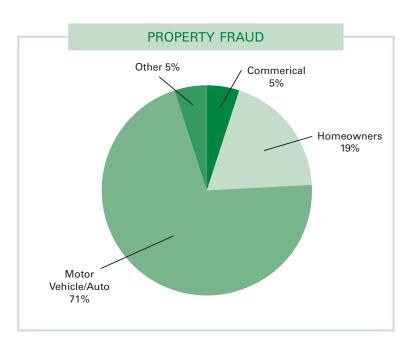
In 2010, the courts ordered restitution of more than \$181,000. Court-ordered restitution since 1999 has reached \$14.1 million. Suspected false insurance claims reported to the IFP, both attempted and collected, have topped \$120 million.





In his first year in office, Governor Robert F. McDonnell signed a Certificate of Recognition proclaiming the week of May 9, 2010 Insurance Fraud Awareness Week. It was presented to the insurance industry at the Virginia Chapter of the International





Association of Special Investigation Units (VA IASIU) Annual Seminar. Insurance Fraud Awareness Week has been recognized in Virginia since 2002.

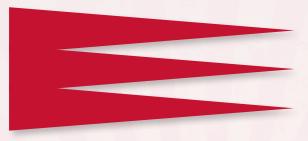
The IFP continues to partner with the Help Eliminate Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) Program

sharing "billboard" space on the
 H.E.A.T. salvage examination vehicle
 and participating in VIN etching
 activities.

In 2010, the IFP expanded its "new media" marketing and public awareness efforts by producing three short "victory dance" videos based on real cases and posting them on the IFP's YouTube Channel and Facebook Fan pages that were created in 2009. These viral videos posted on the Internet's social networks are a unique way to educate the public about insurance fraud and promote the IFP's "Sharp Eye" Reward Program.

We look forward to 2011 and continuing the fight against insurance fraud. As the number of notifications, arrests and prosecutions continues to rise, the IFP would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our success – citizens; commonwealth's attorneys; local, state and federal law enforcement officials; legislators; and insurance industry personnel. Working together, with a "sharp eye" for criminals, we can continue to Stamp Out Fraud in Virginia.

Insurance Fraud Funds First Ever "Red Flag" Training



Red Flag

Red flags were flying this past
November in Williamsburg for the
commonwealth's premier training on
the investigation and prosecution of
insurance fraud training. Using the
Top Gun drug case training manual as
a guide, the Virginia State Police, the
Commonwealth's Attorneys Services
Council and the Virginia Chapter of
the International Association of Special
Investigation Units developed the Red
Flag: Investigation and Prosecution of
Insurance Fraud training.

In the insurance industry a Red Flag is defined as a potential indicator of insurance fraud. The analogy of a three-legged stool also came into play in the development of the training. To develop and prosecute an insurance fraud case, not only do the red flags play an integral roll, but all three partners or legs of the stool -- law enforcement, insurance investigators and prosecutors – have an important roll.

"Red Flag" was designed as a week-long training program for commonwealth's attorneys, Virginia State Police insurance fraud special agents and special investigators from insurance companies (SIU). The training was organized and presented by the Commonwealth's Attorneys Services Council, with funding from the Insurance Fraud Fund. Faculty came from all facets of law enforcement, the legal profession and the insurance industry.

The Red Flag Training was all about team building. Getting the team members to know each other and understand the interlocking roles and responsibilities of all participants in an insurance fraud criminal investigation and prosecution framework was the focus of the training. Seventeen regionally based teams of three - law enforcement, prosecutors and insurance investigators – were recruited. The regions were based on the seven VSP geographical divisions, enabling team members to work with others within their area and with whom they had the potential of working a case.

The program's lectures included the "red flags" of insurance fraud, the scope of insurance fraud, the roles of each discipline in an insurance fraud investigation and prosecution, search and seizure, and trial preparation. A scenario based on an actual insurance fraud case provided team work opportunities, and a moot court wrapped up the week's activities.

Based on the evaluations by the students and faculty, this training will be a recurring event.





Law Enforcement Veteran at the Helm of Insurance Fraud Program

The Virginia State Police welcomed a new deputy director to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). Following the retirement of Major Michael E. Frank on July 1, 2010, Captain Rick A. Jenkins, who served as the division commander for the Bureau of Criminal Investigation Culpeper Field Office, was elevated to the position of BCI deputy director and promoted to the rank of major. He began his new position with the Department on July 10, 2010.

BCI is the investigative arm of the Virginia State Police and consists of seven field offices around the state. Within each field office, there is a General Investigation Section (GIS), which includes the Insurance Fraud special agents, and a Drug Enforcement Section (DES). The Bureau also consists of the Criminal Intelligence Division, Counter-Terrorism & Criminal Interdiction Unit and the newly formed High Tech Crimes Division.

Major Jenkins will supervise the activities of these field offices, as well as the various units and divisions within BCI. He is also tasked with coordinating criminal investigations when the Department is requested to assist other law enforcement agencies across the Commonwealth.

A native of Fauquier County, Major Jenkins began his state police career in 1978 as a dispatcher in Culpeper. Within two years of



Major Rick A. Jenkins Deputy Director Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation

joining the Department, Jenkins graduated from the State Police Academy and began patrolling Spotsylvania County as a trooper in 1980. During the last 23 years, the highly skilled investigator and supervisor has served the Culpeper Division as a special agent, special agent-accountant, assistant special agent in-charge and as a lieutenant supervising the Culpeper Field Office's General Investigation Section. In 2004, he was promoted

to division commander.

Jenkins holds a Bachelor of Liberal Studies in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of Mary Washington and a Postbaccalaureate Certificate in Criminal Justice Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is also a graduate of the Administrative Officers Management Program from North Carolina State University.

The Bureau's new deputy director has received numerous awards and recognitions throughout his 32-year state police career, including the American Red Cross Certificate of Merit and the Eastern Shore's Crimesolvers Chairman Award. In 2008, he was recognized with the Victim's Advocacy Award for his outstanding commitment and work over the years with the Culpeper Victim Witness Program.

Victorious Fraud Fighters Receive Awards in Virginia



2010 Fraud Fighters award winners (left to right) Todd Maxey, Dennis Dodson, Tim Allen, Lisa Champ, Stephanie Vipperman, Carla Keesee, Michael Hardiman, and Stephen Slozak.

The Insurance Fraud Program recognized eight Virginia "Fraud Fighters" in 2010. The Fraud Fighters Award, established in 2005, recognizes those individuals who are victorious in the fight against fraud.

Fraud Fighter nominees came from the Virginia insurance industry, the law enforcement community and the commonwealth's attorneys' offices. The awards were based on the nominees' contributions to Virginia's anti-insurance fraud efforts, which include their involvement and contribution to investigations; prevention and pro-active activities; enforcement; interaction with the insurance community; and financial impact by recoveries and restitution resulting from their fraud-fighting efforts.

The recipients of the 2010 Fraud Fighters Award were:

Carla Keesee, Investigations
 Supervisor with Virginia Farm
 Bureau, Investigator Todd Maxey
 with the Franklin County Sheriff's
 Office and Franklin County

Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney **Tim Allen** for a case involving a stolen 4-wheeler in Franklin County;

- Virginia State Police Senior Special Agent **Dennis Dodson** for his role in removing one of the insurance industry's most egregious abusers who is currently in jail awaiting sentencing;
- Michael Hardiman, Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney in Stafford County, for his tireless efforts in the fight against insurance fraud;
- Stephanie Vipperman, Patrick County's Commonwealth's Attorney, for reducing staged crashes in Patrick County;
- and Investigator Stephen Slozak
 from the Gloucester County Sheriff's
 Office and Lisa Champ, who also
 accepted a posthumous award for
 her husband, Fred Champ, senior
 investigator with Virginia Farm
 Bureau for their investigative work of
 an arson in Gloucester County.





Sharp Eye Reward Fund Update

Two Virginia citizens were victorious this year when they received a Sharp Eye Reward for sharing information with law enforcement that led to the arrest of a fraudster. These Sharp Eye Rewards illustrate how citizens can make a difference when it comes to insurance fraud. Two Sharp Eye rewards, totaling \$3,000,

were presented in 2010. The information provided by these citizens led to the arrests of individuals who tried to defraud insurance companies and were caught.

Since the Sharp Eye Reward Fund was established in 2004, \$76,250 has been paid to 20 recipients in 19 cases. Applications for rewards can be submitted by insurance companies, local and federal law enforcement, as well as State Police.

The Reward Committee, comprised of 12 members from the VSP, the insurance industry, local law enforcement and a commonwealth's attorney, determine if applicants are eligible to receive a reward, as well as the reward amount.

The reward amount is based on the following criteria:

- The importance of the information
- The nature of the crime
- The risk to the source
- The importance of the witness



Only property and casualty lines of insurance are addressed by the Committee, and the investigation must be complete and an arrest made before the reward is considered. If more than one person furnished information about the same incident, the reward shall be divided based primarily upon the relative importance of the source's information.

Insurance professionals, the perpetrator or co-perpetrator of the crime, the crime victim, and Virginia sworn law enforcement officers, jailers, corrections officers and members of their immediate family are ineligible for a reward. The final determination on the Sharp Eye Reward is made by the VSP Superintendent.

The Sharp Eye Reward Fund can pay up to \$25,000 for information leading to the arrest of individuals who commit insurance fraud in the commonwealth of Virginia. Anyone who reports suspected insurance fraud to the IFP, whether or not they are eligible to receive a reward, will remain anonymous.

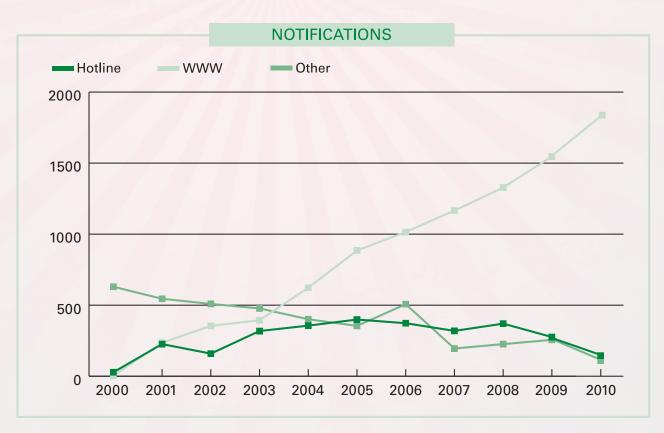
Victorious Viral Videos Highlight Public Awareness Program

Public awareness continues to play an important role in reaching out to Virginia's citizens in an effort to increase their understanding of insurance fraud – what it is, how it affects them and what they can do to reduce the amount of fraud in the commonwealth.

Virginia's nosy insurance fraud fighters released three new "Victory Dance" YouTube videos in 2010, continuing the theme of Virginia's nosy insurance fraud fighters. In each video the fraudsters do a little victory dance when they think they've gotten away with insurance fraud. But, when the fraudsters get caught, Pam and Tony do their own entertaining victory dance. The videos are based on actual cases

and cover auto, personal injury and property fraud. Since the videos were posted on both Facebook and YouTube, there have been more than 2,000 views.

While the total number of notifications received by the IFP remained flat in 2010, the IFP's online presence has meant a substantial increase in the number of notifications received via the Internet. In 2010, the IFP received 1,743 notifications from citizens, insurance investigators and members of law enforcement through the Web site, www.stampoutfraud.com. This is a 12.7 percent increase over the previous year. Fraud-related calls to the toll-free hotline declined by 33 percent in 2010, while notifications received



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by the IFP via fax, direct phone call, email and regular mail also decreased.

The IFP continued the Pay-Per-Click banner advertising for stampoutfraud.com. This was the only paid advertising during 2010, besides the advertorial for Insurance Fraud Awareness Week. This Pay-Per-Click banner advertising allows the Web site to achieve cost-effective exposure on major search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN. From February through July the number of impressions for the ads reached nearly 10 million, with more than 8,000 click-throughs, which produced a click-through-rate (CTR) of .08 percent. The average CTR for all industries and sizes is .03 percent - .05 percent.

In 2010, StampOutFraud.com had 14,813 visits from two visitor types. New Visitors were 11,022 and 3.136 clicks represented Returning Visitors. New visits were up by 63.54 percent.

Insurance Fraud Awareness Week, May 7-14, 2010, received recognition by Governor Robert F. McDonnell. Governor McDonnell issued an Insurance Fraud Proclamation, which was presented by First Sergeant J.C. Miers during the Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Special Investigation Units (VA IASIU) annual training seminar.

One-page advertorials were again purchased to coincide with Insurance Fraud Awareness Week and the announcement of



The VSP Insurance Fraud Program display, with Public Relations Manager Pamela Jewell, at Traveler's Fraud Awareness Day.

the Fraud Fighters Award recipients. The purchase of the advertorials included the Richmond Times Dispatch, the Virginian Pilot, the Roanoke Times and newspapers published by the Washington Suburban Press. The advertorial was also translated into Spanish and placed in Hispanic newspapers in Northern Virginia.

News releases continue to be distributed to both in-state and trade media. In addition to containing information about IFP successes, the releases also covered topics such as holiday safety and disaster fraud. Other public awareness activities included public presentations and training.

Insurance Fraud Victories in 2010

The following cases highlight a few of the Virginia State Police insurance fraud victories of 2010. These illustrate the types of property and casualty fraud cases investigated by the Department.

Suffolk Man's Motorcycle & His Insurance Claim Loses Traction

A Suffolk man's crashed motorcycle wasn't the only thing that lost traction when he attempted to make a false insurance claim.

The day after purchasing a new insurance policy on his 2005 Honda CBR1000RR, Winston Claxton made a claim to GEICO stating his motorcycle sustained damage when he slipped on loose gravel. An investigator with GEICO discovered Claxton's motorcycle was actually sitting in a Virginia Beach motorcycle repair shop on the morning the crash allegedly occurred. Claxton had already put his bike in the body shop prior to taking out insurance on it.

Claxton was arrested by Special Agent Russell Eley, III, Virginia State Police, Insurance Fraud Program, and charged with Attempting to Obtain Money by False Pretenses. Claxton was found guilty of a misdemeanor count of this same offense in January 2010 in Virginia Beach General District Court placed on two years probation and required to pay court costs.

Jury Finds Virginia Man Guilty of Insurance Fraud Insurance Claim for Confiscated Gun Triggers Arrest

Having proofs-of-purchase and receipts for major purchases is recommended for speedy and accurate insurance claims, but keeping the documentation for his guns backfired for one Madison County, Va., man who now faces the possibility of spending 10 years in prison for committing insurance fraud.

Investigation by the Virginia State Police revealed that William G. Batten, Hood, Va., filed 21 claims involving 10 different companies from Oct. 29, 1995 to Sept. 8, 2008. Combined, these claims totaled approximately \$750,000 in losses that he reported. It was determined Batten actually received approximately \$250,000 for these claims from four different insurance companies. The other losses he reported were denied by the companies for various reasons, at which time Mr. Batten would just walk away.





Senior Special Agent Dennis Dodson of the VSP Insurance Fraud Unit spent more than 200 hours reviewing hundreds of pages of documents from insurance companies. Batten would flood the insurance company with documentation for the many items he said were stolen. Not only did this include hundreds of pages of documents he said were receipts for the stolen items, but he also included numerous pages of handwritten and typed property inventories. Dodson discovered a troubling pattern – Batten was claiming the same items on multiple claims.

In the fall of 2008, Batten claimed six guns he owned were stolen from his second home, an old farm house, along with approximately \$73,624 worth of property that included a stove, a refrigerator and his own silk underwear. Dodson's investigation revealed the guns had been confiscated from Batten's property in an unrelated case in 2002 and held as evidence at the local sheriff's office since that time. When Batten provided all this information to the insurance company, he made the mistake of providing one document that listed the serial number of one of the confiscated guns as being one that he said was stolen in the 2008 claim. This was proof of his false claims.

In September of 2009, a Grand Jury returned five felony indictments ranging from Perjury to Attempting to Obtain Money by False Pretense, the Virginia law under which insurance fraud is prosecuted. In January, 2010, Batten was tried in Madison Circuit Court by a jury on three of the five indictments. He was found guilty of a single count of Attempting to Obtain Money by False Pretense. The other two charges were tried at a later date. The jury recommended a 10-year prison sentence.

Double Trouble Sends Fraudster to Jail

When law enforcement and insurance investigators are of a like mind it means trouble for fraudsters, as one Nottoway County man recently discovered.

As a result of the cooperative efforts of the Virginia State Police Bomb and Arson Unit and the Virginia Farm Bureau Insurance Company, Robert Joseph Jenkins of Burkeville, Va., was found guilty of arson, will spend the next five years in the penitentiary on the arson conviction, and make restitution to Virginia Farm Bureau Insurance Company in the amount of \$127,000.

VSP Special Agents M. Dyke and P. Lazear responded to a request for assistance by the Nottoway County Sheriff's Office to determine the cause and origin of a house fire. Independent of the VSP investigation, Virginia Farm Bureau, the insurer of the burned structure, also investigated the cause and origin of the fire.

SA Dyke and Frank Dunton, director of investigations for Virginia Farm Bureau, both qualified as expert witnesses for the court and without prior discussion about the fire scene came to the same conclusion.

The IFP Welcomes New Agents

Three new insurance fraud special agents joined the IFP in 2010, replacing special agents who retired, were promoted or transferred to other units within the VSP. These new insurance fraud agents bring a wealth of experience and investigative expertise to the IFP, along with a strong commitment to fight the crime of insurance fraud.



First Sergeant J. C. Miers III

In addition to three new special agents, the IFP also gained an insurance fraud program coordinator when First Sergeant J. C. Miers III transferred from First Division to VSP Headquarters. He began his career with the VSP in 1989 as a trooper in Division Five. In 1994, Miers was promoted to special agent, working primarily in drug enforcement.

He has worked in the insurance fraud arena since 2001 when he was promoted to First Sergeant in the newly created Insurance Fraud Division, supervising insurance fraud agents in First and Fifth Divisions. With the restructuring of the Department in 2004, he was re-assigned to Division One. In 2010, Miers transferred to the Directors Office, Bureau of Criminal Investigation, as statewide program coordinator for both the Insurance Fraud and Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT) programs.







Senior Special Agent E. Wayne Isaac

Isaac began his career as a trooper with the VSP in January 1986. He was assigned to Vansant upon graduation from the VSP Academy and worked there for ten years. While living and working in Vansant, Isaac was transferred to the recruiter position for Fourth Division. As a result of a restructuring within the Department, Isaac returned to the road

in Buchanan County. In the summer of 1996, Isaac transferred to Wise County and worked as a trooper for nine years. During those nine years in Wise County, Isaac earned his crime prevention specialist certification.

In December 2004, he was promoted to special agent in the arson/bomb unit and was assigned to the Castlewood office. Upon the retirement of Senior Special Agent Bill Whitt in 2009, Isaac was temporarily assigned to insurance fraud cases. His assignment to the insurance fraud position was made official in February 2010. During the interim period, Isaac was intrigued by the large number of fraud investigations. Isaac says he wishes more could be done to slow the trend of insurance fraud.

"We only catch a few and maybe that few will slow the trend and alert the public's perception to the insurance fraud problems." Isaac suggests that educating the public could aid in the reduction of insurance fraud.

The IFP Welcomes New Agents cont.



Special Agent Rick Elgin

Elgin started his career with the VSP in March of 1985. His first assignment as a trooper was in Fluvanna County. In addition to Fluvanna, Elgin was also a trooper in Henry and Pittsylvania counties. In March of 2000, Elgin was promoted to special agent with the Drug Enforcement Division and moved to Wise County to work drug diversion as well as other drug-related

cases in Russell County. He transferred back to Pittsylvania County in 2002 as a drug agent and worked the area until he transferred to auto theft in late 2004.

While working as an auto theft agent, Elgin had an opportunity to work with the insurance fraud agents and found the work both interesting and challenging. In 2006, he began working insurance fraud cases while still assigned to auto theft and decided to request a transfer to insurance fraud. Elgin's transfer to insurance fraud was official in June 2010.

"I have found that Insurance Fraud cases can be very interesting," said Elgin, "as well as challenging on occasion."

When asked about his accomplishments in insurance fraud, Elgin said the first accomplishment that came to mind was a case that was started by retired Senior Special Agent Wayne Stone.

"In 2002, Stone opened a case in Patrick County that involved several staged accidents and thousands of dollars in insurance claims," Elgin explained. "The case remained opened for several years and was transferred to me after Stone retired. With a change in the commonwealth attorney's office, the case was heard in the Patrick County Circuit Court. The defendant pled guilty and was ordered to pay restitution."







Special Agent Steve Pruitt

Pruitt has been a sworn member with the VSP for 16 years. Upon graduating from the Academy, Pruitt's first assignment as a new trooper was to the rural area of Warsaw in First Division. Three years later he transferred to Hanover County and then to Henrico County to experience urban police work. Following his assignment in Henrico,

Pruitt transferred back home to Williamsburg. He was also assigned to the Department's Sex Offender Investigative Unit in the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS).

Since being promoted to special agent, Pruitt has been assigned to General Investigations, Pharmaceutical Drug Diversion and the Insurance Fraud Program. He's completed many specialized schools along the way, including the Virginia Forensic Academy.

"Insurance Fraud is a very serious and widespread problem which affects all of us," said Pruitt. "I am very proud to be a member of the State Police Insurance Fraud Program and feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with such experienced investigators."

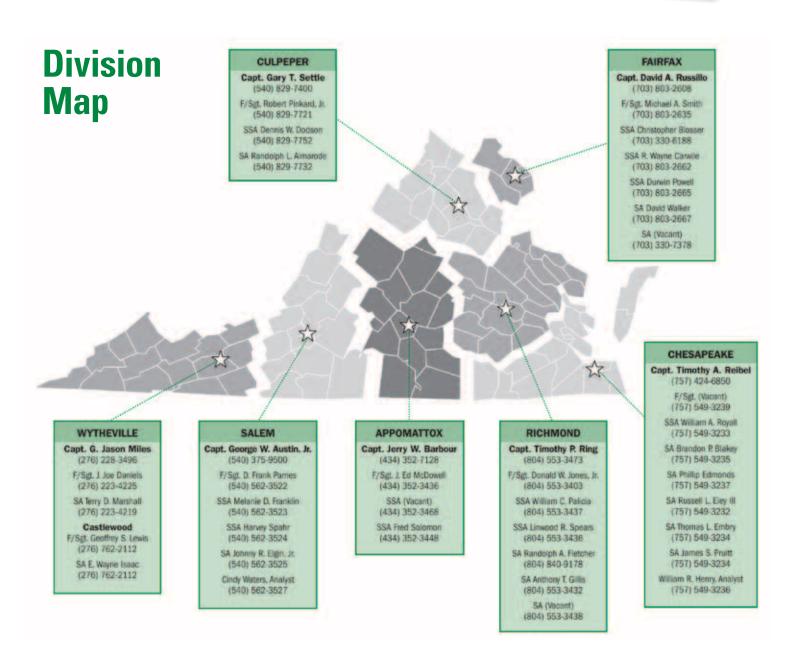
Insurance Fraud Program Activity Report

January 01, 2010 through December 31, 2010

1. Number of notifications received	2,095
A. Hotline	184
B. Web	1,744
C. Other	167
2. Number of notifications sent to unopened case file	1,412
3. Number of investigations initiated	425
4. Number of notifications referred to other BCI Divisions	6
5. Number of notifications referred to other agencies	44
6. Number of cases involving property fraud	1,283
A. Motor Vehicle/Auto	907
B. Homeowners	252
C. Commercial	64
D. Other	60
7. Number of cases involving injury/casualty fraud	678
A. Motor Vehicle/Auto	270
B. Homeowners	36
C. Commercial	81
D. Workers Compensation	183
E. Other	108
8. Number of cases of actual fraud (collected)	324
9. Number of cases of attempted fraud	1,018
10. Total Amount of claimed loss (collected)	\$3,569,024
11. Total Amount of claimed loss (attempted)	\$11,821,279
12. Number of cases presented to Commonwealth's Attorneys	157
13. Number of cases adjudicated	132
14. Number of arrests for insurance fraud	156
15. Number of convictions for insurance fraud	49
A. Felonies	17
B. Misdemeanors	32
16. Number of arrests for related offences	40
17. Number of convictions for related offences	27
18. Amount of restitution ordered	\$181,252
19. Number of fraud awareness presentations	11
20. Number of persons contacted	1,749

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Major Rick A. Jenkins

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