



FY2012 RECOMMENDATION/FY12-D04 INCREASED NUMBER OF DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERTS

Status: Partial Implementation

Actions/Updates

2023 UPDATE (JUNE)

During the FY 2023 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 2023-158 to reauthorize the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) was postponed indefinitely on May 7, 2023. Therefore, with the sunset of the Commission, all activities of the CCJJ ceased on June 30, 2023.

No further monitoring of CCJJ recommendations will occur.

2013 UPDATE

As of 2/26/2013 there are 182 DREs in 60 Colorado Law Enforcement Agencies. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Highway Safety Office (HSO) has scheduled DRE training in May of 2013 in Eagle County for twenty Colorado DRE candidates.

In an effort to increase DRE accessibility in 2012 the CDOT/HSO hosted the Colorado DRE School in Alamosa. The CDOT/HSO is committed to hosting the DRE training as well as the DRE yearly certification training at different locations around the state to encourage statewide involvement. Announcements of DRE training are made available on the CDOT website and sent to all CDOT law enforcement partners (see <http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/alcohol-and-impaired-driving/law-enforcement>).

While selecting DRE candidates for DRE training, priority is given to candidates in underrepresented areas of the state. Of the 23 frontier counties, there are five DREs in five counties (Huerfano, Gunnison, Lincoln, Kit Carson and Yuma). Of the 24 rural counties, there are 43 DREs (2 in Routt, 1 in Grand, 8 in Eagle, 7 in Garfield, 1 in Summit, 1 in Pitkin, 1 in Delta, 8 in Montrose, 1 in Montezuma, 1 in La Plata, 5 in Alamos, 2 in Otero, 3 in Prowers, 1 in Morgan 1 and 1 in Chaffee).

Description

Increase the number of Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) ensuring sufficient coverage in rural and frontier areas of the state.

Agencies Responsible

Discussion

A Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) is a law enforcement officer who has received specialized training and has been certified by the International Association of Chiefs of Police to evaluate and determine if a subject is behaviorally impaired, what drug category(s) is/are causing the impairment or if a medical condition is causing the impairment. A law enforcement officer will often ask for assistance from a specialized DRE officer if they are having difficulty determining the cause of impairment. Colorado had 173 certified DRE officers in 2010. The number of DRE certified officers is growing and is estimated to soon reach 200 in Colorado; however experts estimate the need to be 250-300. Rural and frontier parts of the state frequently do not have immediate access to DREs. Funding for more DREs is a challenge at both state and local levels.*

Footnotes

**Glenn Davis, Manager of Impaired Driving Programs, Office of Transportation Safety, Colorado Department of Transportation.*