VOLUME 91

2026 - QUARTER THREE

Informer

Captain Luke Splattstoesser Graduates from FBI National Academy



The Nebraska State Patrol is proud to announce that Captain Luke Splattstoesser has graduated from the 299th session of the FBI National Academy.

The FBI National Academy is a ten-week program that provides advanced training for law enforcement leaders around the world. Captain Splattstoesser's class was made up of 265 leaders. The class included members of law enforcement agencies across 28 countries, 44 states, and the District of Columbia.

Captain Splattstoesser and his academy class took part in a graduation ceremony that occurred Thursday, September 17, at the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA. Remarks were delivered by FBI Director Kash Patel and law enforcement supporter Shaquille O'Neal.

"Congratulations graduates of FBI National Academy Class 299! We're grateful for opportunities to pursue top notch education and leadership training. Our team is incredibly proud of Captain Splattstoesser for reaching this remarkable milestone in his career," said Colonel Bryan Waugh, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol. "I am certain Captain Splattstoesser will use the knowledge gained from this experience to contribute to the success and safety of Nebraska State Troopers and staff across the state. Thank you to the FBI Director, Kash Patel, and FBI Omaha Special Agent in Charge, Eugene Kowel, for their ongoing support and partnership helping us to ensure safer communities across Nebraska and the United States. To Captain Splattstoesser's family, thank you for your sacrifice during this time away. We appreciate it."

Participation in the FBI Academy is by invitation only, through a nomination process. Nationally, fewer than one percent of officers are offered the opportunity to participate.





Informer Staff

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PRO BONO PUBLICO

The Aviation Support Unit (ASU) maintained a high operational tempo throughout the quarter, providing critical aerial support for law enforcement operations, emergency response, and interagency assistance despite ongoing maintenance challenges.

In July, ASU was requested to assist the WING task force in the Scottsbluff/Gering area with multiple arrest warrants being served for an ongoing case involving a gang operating in the area dealing drugs and guns. ASU deployed two aircraft for the operation and provided real time updates to ground units from the aerial platforms. The coordinated efforts of task force members, allied agencies, and the aviation unit were successful in apprehending numerous individuals involved.

Throughout the quarter, ASU experienced multiple aircraft maintenance challenges, including required maintenance that grounded aircraft for extended periods and equipment failures affecting thermal imaging and downlink capabilities. Despite these obstacles, ASU maintained operational readiness. Pilots and the maintenance technician adjusted work schedules to ensure continuous coverage, maintaining at least one of the unit's four aircraft in operational status at all times.

ASU pilots continued to train in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements. All personnel maintained required certifications, ensuring operational readiness and compliance with regulatory standards. Three of our pilots are working toward new ratings, including Instrument ASEL, Commercial ASEL and Helicopter add-on. This will only bolster the capabilities and response of the aviation unit.

The Aviation Support Unit demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and operational effectiveness throughout the quarter. Despite maintenance limitations, ASU successfully supported major investigations, emergency response operations, and routine law enforcement activities while maintaining continuous aerial coverage.

242 HOURS
Total Flight Time

19
Pursuits Assisted

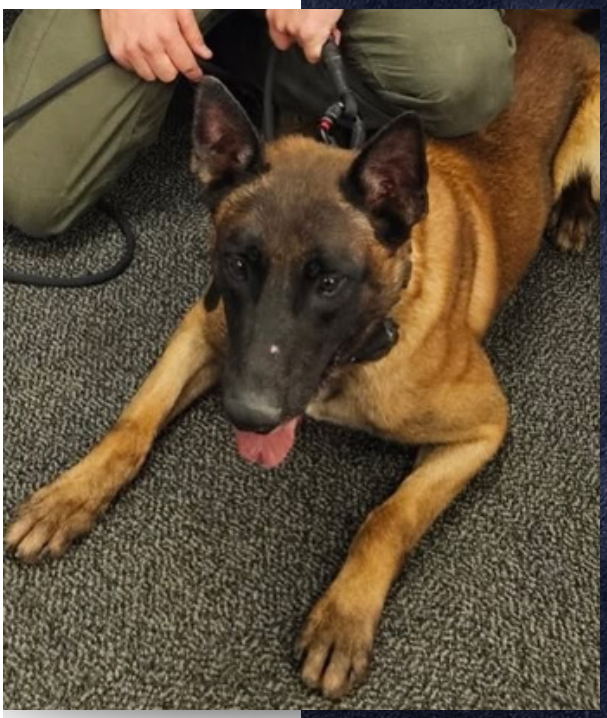
49
Arrests Supported

113
Agency Assists



AVIATION SUPPORT UNIT

Police Service Dogs (PSD)



In the third quarter, the PSD Division continued its work to protect Nebraskans with a total of 131 deployments across the state and 43 felony arrests.

In July, Trooper McKain and K9 Frank performed a traffic stop on Interstate 80. During the stop, K9 Frank detected an odor of a controlled substance coming from the vehicle. A search of the vehicle revealed several packages of suspected cocaine located inside a suitcase. The total weight of the cocaine was ten pounds.

In September, the unit assisted Nebraska State Patrol Investigators with a narcotics investigation in southeast Nebraska. During the search, investigators found approximately 12 pounds of marijuana, 4 pounds of THC edibles, 286 grams of THC wax, 386 grams of suspected psilocybin mushrooms, 69 doses of MDMA, and 25 grams of suspected methamphetamine. Troopers also located the resident of the address while he was driving in Beatrice. Trooper Brown performed a traffic stop and an NSP K9 Gable detected the odor of a controlled substance inside the vehicle. A search of the vehicle located a small amount of suspected methamphetamine.



Calls like these directly support the safety of Nebraskans. By removing harmful drugs from the road, the patrol ensures these don't make their way into local Nebraskan communities.

Additionally, PSD teams increased their numbers by adding three K9s to the team. Please join the division in congratulating PSD Phoenix and PSD RJ for their hard work and dedication in completing the PSD Camp at NSPTA. Both dogs are officially state certified! Additionally, the unit has welcomed PSD Marv. He is still undergoing training, but will soon be on the road.

Narcotic Weights	
METHAMPHETAMINE	71
COCAINE	11.23
MARIJUANA	33
TOTAL	115.23

Deployments	
NARCOTIC	57
EXPLOSIVE	28
PAROL	46
TOTAL	131

Crisis Negotiator Team (CNT)

The Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) for the Nebraska State Patrol has had a busy third quarter for 2026. So far, our negotiators have been activated for more than 10 crisis situations statewide. CNT members are activated for agency SWAT calls, crisis negotiator only call outs, as well as allied agency assists. Our members also assist with interagency training and presentations.

As we continue our mission for the last quarter of the year, CNT members look forward to continuing their training with NSP SWAT and allied agencies. Nebraska State Patrol CNT is continually utilizing new technology and equipment to safely resolve the situations they get called to. The Nebraska State Patrol Crisis Negotiation Team is always looking to add qualified members to their team. If sworn personnel are interested in being part of the CNT Team, please reach out to any current CNT member.

We had two long-serving members retire from the team this year: Lt. James Estwick and Lt. Manny Jimenez. Thank you both for your commitment, professionalism and efforts over the many years you have served.







Hazardous Device Technicians (HDT)



The Hazardous Devices Technicians (HDT) have stayed busy during the third quarter of 2026 as well. They have responded to over 36 calls for service statewide. During these responses, they have recovered over six hundred (600) pounds of explosives, to be destroyed at a later date. One response occurred in North Platte with an individual walking into the Verizon store and placing a box on the counter and advising it was a bomb, then walking out. HDT members responded to the scene and rendered the device safe. They also collectively worked with area Troopers and located the suspect who was placed into custody without incident. The squad continues to provide training to internal and external partners.

We also had two long-serving members retire from the HDT Squad in August: Sgt. Clayton Dishong and Trp. Gabe Skalka. Thank you both for your time, dedication and sacrifice to the mission.

Currently, two apprentices are going through the process to become members of the squad: Trp. Nick Buck and Trp. Gage Gonzales.





Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)

Everyone has had a busy year thus far, and NSP's Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) is no exception. NSP SWAT responds to statewide needs as they arise. These include planned and unplanned events. There have been a total of 10 activations across the state during the third quarter of 2026. These include providing security for POTUS in Grand Island, security for U.S. Speaker of the House Johnson, and surveillance in McCook reference I.C.E. protests.

The team also conducted a two-week SWAT Basic Training in Hastings as well.

Troop Area	Activation Totals
WARRANT SERVICE	3
BARRICADE	3
HOSTAGE	1
MANHUNT	0
NATURAL DISASTER	0
OTHER	3

Call Types	Totals
TROOP A	2
TROOP B	0
TROOP C	2
TROOP D	2
TROOP E	1
TROOP H	3

Carrier Enforcement (CE)

In September, the NSP Carrier Central Division had the privilege of providing an escort for an F-14 Tomcat that began its journey in Pensacola, Florida, and is going to the Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum. The load is being transported by Worldwide Aircraft Recovery based out of Bellevue, NE. NSP Carrier units met the load in Percival, IA, at one of the truck stops and escorted it to the Kansas/Nebraska state line, exiting on Hwy 283, approximately 293 miles in length. Trooper Ravi took some great drone video footage and photos of their work that is included here. Trooper Ravi's video that was posted on the NSP social media pages has seen over two million views.

This quarter, Investigator Kris Hunzeker attended and passed the 10 day Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance Investigative Safety Analysis course. Now she is qualified to conduct Compliance Investigations on all areas of the operations of motor carriers. Additionally, Sergeant Ramsey recently represented our agency at the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) North American Inspectors Championship (NAIC) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which took place from August 10–14, 2026. Sgt. Ramsey competed against an elite field of 47 top inspectors from across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, securing 3rd place in the competition. The NAIC is the only continent-wide event dedicated to commercial motor vehicle inspection excellence. Competitors undergo grueling, timed assessments testing their proficiency in:

- North American Standard Level I Inspection
- Hazardous Materials/Dangerous Goods & Cargo Tank Inspections
- Passenger Carrier Vehicle (Motorcoach) Inspections Out-of-Service Criteria Exams

Currently, the Carrier Enforcement division is finishing the Metropolitan Aggressive and Prevention Selective (MAPS) Team season. For the quarter, NSP saw the following:

- 7 MAPS were conducted with a total of 180 inspections completed
- 660 total violations were cited, with 84 resulting from an OOS defect
- The average number of inspections per selective came to about 25
- The average number of violations per selective came to about 94
- Out of Service rates are below for all inspections:
  - 47% OOS Altogether
  - 37% OOS Vehicles
  - 10% OOS Drivers





Criminal Identification Division (CID)

The Criminal Identification Division (CID) continues to work hard and exceed expectations. Since I have been director, I continue to be impressed with the work that all of CID does to update and disseminate accurate criminal histories and to assist allied agencies across the state. I revere this team as unsung heroes, doing a job that many people don't understand, but completing tasks critical to keeping people safe. Through the month of September, the CID has processed 74,920 Person of Interest (PIO) and has generated $3,269,592 in total revenue. All the teams play an integral part in ensuring that this work gets done accurately and in a timely manner. The following illustrates the work that each team has completed this year.

AFIS – the AFIS team has worked 70,351 cards and our AQUA team continues to work on project work and has provided 18 training classes to 11 law enforcement agencies across the state. The AFIS management also continues work on a twelve-million-dollar upgrade to the AFIS system. Upon completion, the system will be upgraded with workflows which create efficiencies when processing the ever-growing number of new prints into the system.

Backgrounds – the Backgrounds team has processed 30,718 National and State Fingerprint based background checks, which is a 10.38% increase compared to last year.

Research – the Research team has completed 38,577 Nebraska name checks with an average turnaround time of 3.76 days and updated 40,001 arrest records.

Front desk – the Front desk team has fielded 18,418 phone calls and has printed 5,532 people. There are also personnel in each Troop area taking prints for a total of 22,381 statewide.

NICS – In 2026, the NICS Program has supported agencies 1,096 times to date. A major milestone for this unit was the FBI's triennial NICS audit, conducted August 10–13, 2026. While the audit process is still underway, initial feedback has been positive, and the FBI was complimentary of the Nebraska State Patrol's NICS processes and overall quality of record maintenance and reporting.

QAIP – The QAIP team has conducted 54 on-site assessments and trainings, resulting in sharing CID's message of maintaining accurate, complete, and timely criminal history records with over 320 criminal justice agencies. The statewide percentage of receiving ink roll fingerprint cards from partnered law enforcement agencies within the 15-day statute-based time frame is at 80.08%, which is a 10.09% increase from the same time frame in 2025.

NCHIP – The NCHIP team has updated or verified 25,432 dispositions within the Patrol Criminal History (PCH) Database. This is an increase of 12.59% from the same time frame in 2025.

CHP – The CHP handled record numbers of renewal permit applications from a record number of first holders in 2021. The team made its way through the backlog of renewal applications and is now back to normal, issuing approximately 60 concealed handgun permits per day. Currently, the state of Nebraska has 76,640 permit holders in the state.



Colonel's Corner

ADAPTING • PREPARING • SUCCEEDING

The Nebraska State Patrol has never been an organization that stands still. The demands of our profession continue to change, and our responsibility is to ensure we are prepared to meet them.

Over the past several months, we've seen what that looks like in action. From the planning and coordination behind a historic presidential visit to Grand Island to extraordinary drug interdiction results on Nebraska's highways, our people have demonstrated the professionalism, preparation, and teamwork that define this organization. As detailed in this edition of *The Informer*, across Special Operations, Carrier Enforcement, Criminal Identification, our Police Service Dogs unit, and our training and leadership development efforts, we continue to build the capabilities needed to protect Nebraskans today and into the future.

That progress extends well beyond the field. We are nearing completion of the Crime Laboratory expansion; we have rolled out new computer-aided dispatch technology, and we continue to invest in the tools and resources our people need to succeed. Our dedicated dispatchers remain an essential part of that mission, providing calm, professionalism, and critical support when seconds matter, while also experiencing challenges. From the road to the laboratory, the communications center to our administrative offices, accounting to human resources, legal to information technology, every member serving within every area of this team contributes to our success!
We've also experienced important changes within our ranks. We've recognized dedicated members retiring after years of service, welcomed new Troopers and K9 partners, celebrated professional milestones, and continued developing the leaders who will carry our mission forward. Each represents an investment in the future of the Nebraska State Patrol.

Adapting requires more than responding when circumstances change. It means preparing in advance, embracing new ideas, learning from experience, and continually looking for ways to improve. It also means maintaining the fundamentals that have always mattered: doing the right thing, holding ourselves and each other accountable, taking care of one another, and serving the people of Nebraska with integrity and compassion.
I'm proud of the work happening across this agency. Our success is not the result of one person, one unit, or one accomplishment. It comes from a team of professionals who understand their role, trust one another, and remain committed to a shared mission.
As we move forward, let's continue to invest in our people, strengthen our capabilities, and prepare for whatever comes next. The work will continue to evolve, but our commitment to Nebraska remains constant.

Thank you for what you do every day. Let's continue to adapt, prepare, and succeed together.

- Colonel Bryan D. Waugh

Nebraska State Patrol Welcomes Two New K9s to the Ranks

The Nebraska State Patrol is proud to announce the addition of two new dogs to the NSP Police Service Dog Unit.

PSD Phoenix and PSD RJ have recently completed their certification and are now on the road serving Nebraska. The training and certification process takes the dogs approximately four months to complete alongside their Trooper handlers.

RJ is a 1 ½ year old Belgian Malinois. He is originally from Poland and was purchased for NSP by the Nebraska State Patrol Foundation following a generous donation from Shari and Jim Koelzer to honor Ryan J. Koelzer, for whom RJ is named. RJ is certified in Narcotics Detection, Patrol, Tracking, and Evidence Recovery. He is stationed in Kearney.

Phoenix is a 4 ½ year old Belgian Malinois. He is originally from the Czech Republic and was donated to NSP by the Omaha Police Department. Phoenix is certified in Narcotics Detection, Patrol, Tracking, and Evidence Recovery. He is stationed in North Platte.

Marv is a 1 year old Dutch Shepard. Similar to Phoenix, he is originally from the Czech Republic. He is currently completing his training in Patrol operations, Narcotics, Tracking, and Evidence Recovery. By Christmas, he will have his training completed and begin his service in Kearney.



Phoenix



RJ



Marv

Troopers Help Kick Off Husker Gameday



Husker Game days are back! The Nebraska football team kicked off the 2026 season Saturday, September 5, at Memorial Stadium. Nebraska State Troopers teamed up with several partners to help keep fans safe on the road and at the game.

"Every Husker game starts with a game plan, and this year fans may need to adjust their usual game plan because of multiple road projects in and around Lincoln," said Colonel Bryan Waugh. "With an 11 a.m. kickoff, fans need to prepare now to plan their route to the stadium. Then be sure to keep your focus on the road and pack your patience as other fans are adjusting to new routes as well."

The Nebraska State Patrol works closely with many partners on gameday. Troopers partner with the Lincoln Police Department, Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, UNL Police Department, Nebraska Department of Transportation, and Lincoln Transportation and Utilities to keep fans safe as they travel to and from the game, as well as in and around Memorial Stadium. As the season continues, fans are advised to take routes recommended by NDOT and LTU.

NSP Trooper Pilots assist with traffic flow from the NSP Helicopter, offering an eye in the sky to relay information to troopers on the ground. Fans can also hear live traffic reports from Trooper Brett before and after the game on Huskers Radio Network stations.

"Husker Gameday is a massive team effort for public safety," said Colonel Waugh. "We're proud to have dozens of Troopers assisting in various capacities. From escorting Coach Rhule and the team, to providing security inside the stadium, to monitoring traffic on the road, every team member has an important role to play."

Inside the stadium, troopers, deputies, and officers team up to keep the gameday experience safe. Any fan in need of assistance during the game can contact any first responder or event staff member. Fans can also text 402-472-0800 to reach UNLPD dispatch inside the stadium.



NSP's portion of this effort is made possible thanks in part to grant funding from the Nebraska Department of Transportation – Highway Safety Office. Anyone who sees a reckless or impaired driver can call the NSP Highway Helpline at *55 or 800-525-5555.

New Hires

July 2026

- Tim Ellerbee, Office Specialist – CID Backgrounds, Lincoln
- Liberty Baker, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Alexis Hackbart, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Dylan Hall, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Avery Hayward, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Nathaniel Heins, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Conner Hendrickson, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Ryen House, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Ashton Koch, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Zachary Olson, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Brendan Owings, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Gage Schmidt, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Jordan Soto-Stopak, Officer Candidate – Camp 74, Grand Island
- Jasmyne McDonald-Gebert, Communications Specialist, Lincoln

August 2026

- Jarred Rogers, Security Guard, Lincoln
- Adrianna Lott, Communications Specialist, Lincoln
- Ashly Reese, Communications Specialist, Lincoln

September 2026

- Levi Frocken, IT Applications Developer – NITE, Lincoln

Transfers

July 2026

- Seth Olson, CE Trooper to CE Investigator, North Platte
- Theodore Gans, CE Trooper to Drug Investogator, McCook
- Margarita Penaflor, Patrol Trooper, Lexington to Ogallala

August 2026

- Brandon Wilkie, Carrier Enforcement to Drug Inv., Waverly to Lincoln
- Chase Sund, Investigator, Omaha to Lincoln
- Gena Jones, Investigative Services Lieutenant, Norfolk to Lincoln
- Pedram Nabegh, Criminal Investigator to Special Inv. Unit, Lincoln
- Ryan Stirn, Patrol Trooper to Drug Investigator, Hastings

September 2026

- Robert Golden, Criminal Investigator to Special Inv. Unit, Lexington
- Isaiah Jaramillo, Criminal Investigator to Special Inv. Unit, Omaha
- Cassandra Ramsey, CID Office Specialist to Supply Tech II, Lincoln
- Samuel Gustafson, Patrol Trooper to CE Trooper, Omaha to Waverly
- Anthony McGlade, Patrol Trooper to CE Trooper-Portables, Omaha
- Brian Farmer, Patrol Trooper to CE Trooper-Portables, Omaha



Retirements

July 2026

- Martin Denton, CE Captain, Lincoln
- Jamey Balthazor, Patrol Sergeant, Signey
- Tim Arnold, Inv. Services Lieutenant, North Platte

Separations

July 2026

- Bazian Al Karwani, Security Guard, Lincoln
- Karen Cruz, Administrative Technician – CID Research, Lincoln
- Jay Hendrickson, Security Guard, Lincoln

August 2026

- Scott Morrill, IT Business Systems Analyst, Lincoln
- Jessica Rogers, Communications Specialist, Lincoln
- Olivia Warren, Office Specialist – CID Front Desk, Lincoln
- William Salisbury, Communications Specialist Supervisor, Lincoln
- Domenic DosSantos, Communications Specialist, Lincoln
- Henry Baumert, Communications Specialist, Lincoln
- Matthew Walker, Patrol Trooper, O'Neill
- Amberlynn Regier, Communications Specialist, Lincoln

September 2026

- Jeffery Kubitz, Supply Manager, Lincoln
- Timothy Ellerbee, Office Specialist – CID Backgrounds, Lincoln
- Jonathan Mims, Public Safety Software Specialist, Lincoln
- Ethan Broker, Patrol Trooper, Beatrice
- Rachel Andrew, Administrative Programs Officer I–QAIP, Lincoln

Promotions

July 2026

- Michael Nutsch, Patrol Trooper to Patrol Sergeant, Alliance
- Christopher McGuane, Patrol Trooper to Patrol Sergeant, Omaha to Fremont
- Michael Maytum, CE Lieutenant to CE Captain, Lincoln
- Melissa Barton, Supply Tech II to Supply Manager, Lincoln

August 2026

- James Penderson Jr. Patrol Sergeant to TA Lieutenant, Grand Island
- Benjamin Pomajzl, CE Inv. Sergeant to CE Lieutenant (MCSAP), Lincoln

September 2026

- Elizabeth Herink, FS III to Forensic Lab Supervisor – Latents, Lincoln

Photos Around The State

ALL IMAGES WERE TAKEN BY VARIOUS NSP PERSONNEL AND FRIENDS DURING THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2026.


























Congrats to our
Nebraska Information Analysis
Center Interns!
STATE TROOPER
Life Net
Omaha
333

In Memory of Those Who Have Paid The Ultimate Sacrifice While Serving The State Of Nebraska









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MARVIN L. HANSEN #98
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MICHAEL D. FARBER #427
ROBERT J. CHAB #221
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Be sure to checkout our website to stay up to date on the happenings at the Nebraska State Patrol.

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