

# **Delaware State Police Unveils Historic Legacy of Troop 9: Service from the Canal to Delaware's Capital**

Delaware State Police celebrates a century of service since being founded in 1923. Troop 9 is the newest troop to be added to the agency. The history of Troop 9 dates back to 1973, when then-Governor Russell Peterson dedicated the new troop. The building was designed to match the early American architecture of the other buildings in the historic town of Odessa. Troop 9 was responsible for providing services in New Castle County from the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal to Smyrna. Initially, Troop 9 housed 23 patrol units and members of the Auto Theft Unit. The location was chosen to provide easy access for visitors passing through and members of the growing Odessa area. The building was purposefully designed to provide a smooth and seamless transition from the well-traveled US Route 13 corridor, with the parking lot only 200 yards from the roadway. The Rt-13 corridor was the main route to popular vacation destinations located in the southern end of the State. Troop 9 became a familiar sight to those traveling to the beautiful Delaware beaches and coastal areas.



Much has changed in the Odessa area since 1973. There was rapid growth and development of the MOT area (Middletown, Odessa, and Townsend) during the late 1980s, which resulted in a concentrated effort to update and expand the functionality of Troop 9. This included moving the front entrance to provide a more convenient access point to the public, as well as restructuring the interior office space to provide room for the growing Special Investigations Unit.



During the early 1990s, the construction of the Roth Bridge and US Route 1 corridor provided a much more efficient route of travel to points south of Odessa, and the need for expanded police services became evident. Troop 9 staffing levels increased substantially to meet the needs along the Rt-1 corridor, as well as the dramatic increase in population in Southern New Castle County.

As Troop 9 entered the new millennium, its mission to enhance the quality of life for all Delaware citizens and visitors remained unchanged. In 2014, in response to the continual growth of Southern New Castle County and the North Dover area, the patrol area for Troop 9 was increased to provide law enforcement services in both New Castle and Kent Counties. This gave Troop 9 the distinction of having the largest geographical patrol area in the state. The Troop 9 patrol area now encompasses the Roth bridge to the North Dover area, and all points west and east of Rt-1.

Troop 9 has evolved over the last half-century to meet the needs of the community and changes to the state's infrastructure. What has not changed is the dedication of the troopers assigned to Troop 9.

"I am honored to be the commander of Troop 9," said Captain Mike Reader, who has served as a trooper for 30 years. "I am fortunate to have so many hardworking men and women willing to work around the clock to protect our citizens and visitors. The Troop 9 area encompasses a vast terrain, posing numerous challenges. Yet, the dedicated troopers at Troop 9 consistently and professionally rise to meet these demands, delivering excellent service to all."

