

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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First Regional DUI Task Force in Virginia Set to Begin

March 10, 2017 – Police Chiefs from the County of Roanoke, City of Roanoke, City of Salem, and Town of Vinton announced Friday the formation of the state’s first regional DUI task force referred to as SOAR, or “Sober On All Roads.”

In 2015, more than 10,000 people across the United States died in alcohol-related crashes; 241 people died in Virginia and eight in the Roanoke Valley. An analysis of alcohol-related crashes in the region revealed a common problem along the major routes, to include I-81, I-581, Rt. 11, Rt. 221, Rt. 460, and Rt. 419. The Police Departments applied for and received a Highway Safety Project grant from the Department of Motor Vehicles to fund the SOAR task force which will focus solely on the detection and arrest of impaired drivers. The task force will also partner with the Virginia State Police to ensure aggressive DUI enforcement on all roadways in the Valley.

“The law enforcement agencies in the Roanoke Valley are committed to reducing impaired driving on our roadways and keeping our communities safe,” stated Roanoke County Police Chief Howard Hall. “Designate a driver, call a taxi, use a ride-share service, but never drink and drive. It is simply not acceptable.”

The new task force kicks off around St. Patrick’s Day festivities, one of the more popular times of year for alcohol-related activities. Members of the task force will take part in the Roanoke St. Patrick’s Day parade on Saturday as a reminder to not drink and drive.

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