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Lee PD seeking to get reaccredited

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Saturday, August 20, 2011

LEE — On Sunday, an assessor for an on-site evaluation will be riding with police, inspecting files and determining if the department is following standards set by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA.)

Lee Police are hoping to renew their CALEA accreditation this year and have already begun the process with an assessor. This weekend, the department will begin the voluntary process to keep its accreditation and must comply with 112 standards.

The department was first recognized in 2008.

"This is our first reaccreditation," said Sgt. Tom Dronsfield. "Typically it's the hardest."

When the department went through the process three years ago, they had two issues with file maintenance, including needing a procedure for when an officer's weapon does not work and needs to be fixed or replaced. The department adjusted the wording in the policy and was able to move forward with the accreditation process.

On Monday, staff will meet with the assessor and the department will also be reviewed for its booking and other procedures. Cruisers and equipment will also be checked.

As part of the on-site assessment, members of the community are invited to talk to the assessor about the Lee Police Department on Monday. Those interested may call 659-6664 or stop by the station between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Sessions are limited to 10 minutes and people must address the agency's ability to comply with CALEA standards.

A copy of the standards is available at the Lee Police Department by contacting Sgt. Tom Dronsfield at 659-5866.

Written comments about the department's ability to meet the standards can be submitted to, Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. (CALEA), 13575 Heathcote Blvd., Suite 320, Gainesville, VA 20155.

On Tuesday, the department will hold an exit interview with the assessor and may learn if the department will be recommended for final review by the CALEA and possibly get reaccredited in November.

Recognition lasts for three years, during which the department must submit an annual report showing continued compliance with the standards under which it was originally recognized.

For more information regarding CALEA, write to the commission at 13575 Heathcote Blvd., Suite 320, Gainesville, VA 20155 or call (703) 352-4225 or e-mail calea@calea.org.