



South Carolina Department of Public Safety

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February 13, 2018

Hon. Wm. Weston J. Newton
South Carolina House of Representatives
P.O. Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Committee Chairman Newton:

In accordance with the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Subcommittee's Recommendation No. 26, the South Carolina Department of Public Safety hereby provides its first quarterly update. The recommendation called for updates beginning on April 3, 2017, but the Committee's Study was not approved until November 13, 2017, so the Department has used that date for calculating the time frame in which to provide quarterly updates.

Recommendation No. 2

Research the cost and feasibility of implementing a career path for agency employees.

Response

In September 2015, the Department implemented a Salary and Career Path Restructuring for all law enforcement officers holding the rank of Major or lower. Additionally, in June 2016 the Department increased the entry level salary for new law enforcement officers and adjusted salaries for current law enforcement officers holding the rank of Major or lower.

The Highway Patrol is currently conducting the appropriate research necessary to update and revise a previously-drafted "Commissioned Officer's Career Path and Retention Plan (September 2004)." This would involve a comprehensive change to the current career path if implemented.

Recommendation No. 3

Track applicable data to determine which recruiting methods are effective in obtaining applicants with the temperament and ability to successfully complete appropriate Criminal Justice Academy courses. Include this data in the agency's Accountability Report each year.



SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY PATROL



STATE TRANSPORT POLICE



BUREAU OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES



IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT UNIT



Internationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency

Response

The Highway Patrol recently completed a year-end review of its 2017 recruiting efforts. For the year, the Patrol received a total of 1,885 applications that met minimum qualifications. Highway Patrol recruiters attended 36 universities, 43 colleges and technical schools, 25 military installations, 22 career fairs, and 39 community events throughout the year that produced 211 applicants as a result of direct contact with a recruiter. Recruiters spent 63% of their time at college and military events which correlates with the fact that 60% of new hires in 2017 had college degrees and/or military experience.

Recommendation No. 5

Update the agency's Personnel Allocation Model to conform to national standards.

Response

The Highway Patrol has completed the necessary research and revised the agency's Personnel Allocation Model. The proposed draft is currently under review for potential implementation.

Recommendation No. 6

Review industry best practices on trooper fatigue under various shift changes.

Response

Two troops within the Highway Patrol will be utilized to implement a pilot program in which all applicable troop enforcement personnel are scheduled in 10-hour shifts vs. the current 12-hour shifts. The targeted implementation date of the pilot program is April 2018. This program is projected to last six (6) months. Upon completion, the program will be evaluated in its entirety and updates will be provided in future reports.

Recommendation No. 15

Adopt a process by which employees can provide feedback to the agency anonymously.

Response

The agency deployed suggestion boxes at headquarters and at all field offices in November 2017. The number of suggestions has been overwhelming. In December 2017, 52 suggestions were made and

there were 55 suggestions made in January 2018. The Department continues to evaluate these suggestions to make changes which will impact employees in a positive manner.

Additionally, the Department has implemented a Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Program. The program consists of two levels of advisory committees, (a) local committees within each troop or region and (b) a state committee. Officers select representatives from within their office to serve on the local committee which is scheduled to meet by the end of February, and then quarterly thereafter. The local committee representatives gather suggestions and comments from their constituents for presentation to the local committee. Representatives from each of the local committees then convene a state committee for a larger agency-wide discussion of these ideas with Division Directors. The state committee is scheduled to have its first meeting by the end of March, and quarterly thereafter.

The Department also implemented an "Ask the Director" e-mail address which allows employees to ask questions of the Director directly via e-mail.

Recommendation No. 17

Require Troop Commanders and Supervisors in the Blythewood Office, including the Director, to spend one day per month on the road to stay abreast of troopers' daily activities.

Response

The director and command staff of the various SCDPS divisions continue to participate in ride-alongs with officers which provide a firsthand view of the daily challenges faced by the officer working the road.

In an effort to have a greater field presence for the command staff, the department has regionalized some of its promotional and recognition ceremonies. This provides an opportunity for command staff to interact with officers at the local level while reducing the amount of time that those officers have to travel to headquarters.

Recommendation No. 20

Coordinate a meeting with the division of State human Resources and other agencies which may have similar scheduling situations (e.g., Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Corrections, and Department of Social Services), to discuss ways to reduce the amount of time necessary to enter and update personnel hours in the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS).

Response

Agency personnel have met with representatives from the Department of Administration (SCEIS) four times since August 2017 to discuss improvements to administrative processes related to time and leave. The major objectives of these meetings were to streamline and reduce the workload of time administrators agency-wide in the SCEIS timekeeping system as well as to improve the agency's ability to track working time attributed to hazardous weather, special events, and other projects.

The Payroll & Leave Team have developed a plan to train and reduce the workload for Time Administrators throughout the agency over the next year. This project was rolled out for the time administration staff on February 9, 2018. Additionally, the Office of Human Resources is working with the Finance Division and the Safety Improvement Team to implement a plan to begin using the new time tracking methods recommended by SCEIS.

Sincerely,



Leroy Smith
Director

LS/mg