DIRECTOR’S CURRENT OVERVIEW AND STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

Agency Strategic Outlook

Today, Texas faces far more insidious threats than it has in the past, to include ruthless Mexican cartels, violent transnational and statewide gangs, high-threat criminals such sex offenders who prey upon children, domestic terrorists, and international terrorist organizations who seek to destroy us and our way of life.

Our adversaries do not respect jurisdictional boundaries, and they exploit rapidly changing technology to thwart law enforcement. The unsecure border with Mexico, and the resulting multibillion dollar drug and human smuggling businesses, poses a serious threat to Texas and the nation. The globalization and convergence of crime and terrorism requires law enforcement agencies at all levels to work closely together as a team, adopting viable strategies to quickly prioritize and address evolving threats.

Natural disasters such as wild fires, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and human and animal disease remain a constant and unpredictable threat to Texas communities requiring constant improvements in cross-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary capabilities, planning, training and execution. The Department plays an important role in disaster response and recovery through its Texas Division of Emergency Management and the Texas Highway Patrol. And when Texas experiences a catastrophic disaster, the entire Department responds.

The State Legislature has entrusted the Department of Public Safety with varied and vital responsibilities, and we must excel in all that we have been assigned. In July 2009, the Sunset Advisory Commission cited the need for the Department to modernize its organization and business processes and break down “silos” inhibiting cooperation across the agency.

The Department’s new organizational structure closely aligns patrol, investigations, counterterrorism, security, and intelligence under one Deputy Director, who also oversees the seven new unified regional commands that have been empowered to execute the Department’s mission within their area of operation. Establishing a major investigation capability leveraging all of the capabilities of the Department has and will continue to result in success, and the importance of enhancing the Department’s tactical capability has already been demonstrated on the border and through deployments across the state.

All administrative, financial, information technology, local law enforcement support services, and licensing and regulatory functions have been consolidated under the Services Deputy Director, which has enabled the development of an enterprise architecture to consolidate numerous legacy information technology systems and applications across the Department, delivery of the long awaited Driver License System, and the centralization of financial operations across the Department to enhance internal controls and accountability of funding. The importance of adopting new businesses processes has been demonstrated in licensing and
regulatory services, such as Concealed Handgun Licenses, in which the process was streamlined to eliminate backlogs and the need to divert high value Trooper resources from patrol duties.

The Department faces six challenges:

- Protect Texas from increasingly dangerous criminal and terrorism threats with the same or less resources
- Increase hiring qualifications, training, and performance standards on the job at a time when other law enforcement agencies are paying more and requiring less
- Address pay disparity of noncommissioned personnel who are essential to the Department, and yet are paid less for the same work than at other state agencies
- Provide exceptional service in the issuance of driver licenses even though the demand and new requirements have exceeded our capacity in personnel and facilities
- Modernize the Department’s information technology to include a case management system and financial, human resource, grant tracking, and inventory applications
- Address over $370 million in repairs to DPS facilities across the state, and acquire regional facilities in San Antonio and El Paso

To address these challenges, the Department submitted to the Texas State Legislature exceptional items approved by the Public Safety Commission for consideration during the 82nd Legislative session.

There is no more important role of government than protecting its citizens, and the men and women of DPS stand ready to do so regardless of the threat.