

December 13, 2022

Representative Troy Waymaster
Chairman – Special Committee on State Employee and Board Member Compensation
State Capitol, Room 111-N / 300 SW 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Mr. Chairman:

SUBJECT: KHP Response to Committee Inquiries

The Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP) respectfully submits the following information in response to inquiries received during the agency's presentation to the committee on November 29th.

Representative Leo Delperdang:

1. **QUESTION:** How many recruits were in the class in 2016?

ANSWER: Class #56 was the only recruit class in 2016. Of the 43 recruits who started the academy, 35 graduated.

2. **QUESTION:** How many KHP uniformed officers are eligible for retirement:

ANSWER: There are currently 60 uniformed members who are eligible for retirement and 16 additional uniformed members who will become eligible in 2023.

3. **QUESTION:** Where did the \$25.05 starting wage for recruits come from that was implemented with the last increase and is this competitive?

ANSWER: The Executive and Legislative branches worked together through the 2022 Session to determine a competitive pay increase for the Patrol.

ANSWER: Yes, at the time the pay increase was approved and implemented the Patrol believed the increase made the agency competitive. However, in a short amount of time other law enforcement agencies within the state and neighboring state agencies have significantly raised their starting pay above the Patrol's entry-level hourly pay.

Representative William Sutton:

1. QUESTION: Has there been a reduced effort to recruit military personnel?

ANSWER: No, there has never been a time when the agency was not actively recruiting from the military, especially now. The Patrol recognizes the value of military service and has greatly benefitted from those who have and are currently serving. The Patrol is currently engaged with Fort Riley and presents at job fairs held on base for military members who are preparing to separate from the military. The Patrol is actively seeking to partner with all military installations to find the best qualified applicants.

2. QUESTION: Inquiry regarding the Patrol's tattoo policy.

ANSWER: Colonel Jones' administration has made progressive enhancements to the Patrol's Personal Appearance policy by allowing applicants and patrol members who possess non-offensive tattoos that would be visible in a Class C uniform (short sleeve shirt) by requiring those individuals to wear a Class B uniform (long sleeve shirt) year-round. Originally, applicants who possessed any tattoos visible in a Class C uniform were automatically disqualified. The change broadens our ability to attract more applicants while maintaining our professionalism through uniformity.

Senator Michael Fagg:

1. QUESTION: Whom is the target audience being recruited, and are they experienced in law enforcement, or do they have no experience?

ANSWER: The Patrol is interested in both experienced law enforcement officers and those with no experience. The agency is focused on recruiting and retaining as many quality candidates as we are able to attract. The Patrol is committed to hiring the highest quality of individuals dedicated to the mission and goals of the agency while maintaining the public's trust.

2. QUESTION: What is the target goal or the number of uniformed officers, and is there a formula that is used to identify this number?

ANSWER: The Patrol is operating off numbers from several past administrations and has not reached the existing target number of 565 uniformed members. The 565 number is a combined total of 525 Troopers and 45 Motor Carrier Inspectors & Capital Police Officers.

ANSWER: There is no known formula that has been used to identify a specific number of personnel in recent years.

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4. QUESTION: Has the target number increased over the last five to 10 years?

ANSWER: No. The 565 uniformed members total has been a standard number used by several past administrations.

Representative Rick Kloos

1. QUESTION: How does the Highway Patrol balance additional benefits (perks) offered to recruit candidates and those seasoned officers that have been on the job for several years so as not to lose the experienced officers?

ANSWER: There are no additional perks offered to recruits or seasoned officers. The Patrol is bound by state statute KSA 74-2114 pertaining to the compensation, expenses, probationary period, assignment, and moving expenses of personnel. The Patrol provides the same benefits to all uniformed members and takes a great deal of pride in the quality of the training, equipment, cars, uniforms, weapons, ballistic protection, and technology provided to each member.

However, some law enforcement agencies are being more competitive than the KHP by surpassing our pay, offering sign-on bonuses, and providing relocation expenses for new hires.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information and for the committee's continued support of the Kansas Highway Patrol.

Respectfully,



HERMAN T. JONES, Colonel
Superintendent

cc: Lt. Colonel Jason De Vore, Asst. Superintendent
Major Andrew Dean, Executive Commander
Sherry Macke, CFO
Murl Riedel, KLRD Analyst