

Oregon State Police

Additional Data Analytics Could Better Determine Trooper Staffing Levels and Resource Needs

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Secretary of State
Shemia Fagan



Audits Director
Kip Memmott



Audit Highlights

Oregon State Police Additional Data Analytics Could Better Determine Trooper Staffing Levels and Resource Needs

Why this audit is important

- Oregon State Police (OSP) is a law enforcement agency with a broad set of duties that includes responsibility to patrol Oregon's 7,000 miles of highways and support local sheriffs and city and Tribal police.
- OSP has eliminated 24-hour coverage across the state due to changes in its funding source in 1980 from the state highway fund to the General Fund.
- OSP has worked with the Legislature and the Department of Administrative Services to increase resources and restore trooper positions, yet still holds positions vacant to cover other costs.
- OSP troopers experienced additional service demands during the 2020 wildfires, protest response, and COVID-19 pandemic.
- Police reform has been a topic of national conversation in recent years and numerous bills have been passed on the subject in Oregon.

What we found

1. While there is no best practice dictating the appropriate number of police officers for any one jurisdiction, OSP determines its trooper staffing needs using a simplistic analysis based primarily on Oregon's population. A more comprehensive approach would allow OSP to identify actual staffing needs when developing future budgets, to better leverage existing troopers, and to respond to changing expectations of law enforcement both nationally and in Oregon. ([pg. 15](#))
2. OSP's area command trooper deployment schedules are not consistently developed or documented. OSP leadership should implement formal expectations, processes, and tools for the area commanders to use. Having a uniform and data-driven process for trooper deployment would help ensure agency priorities are met and inform the overall patrol scheduling plan. ([pg. 18](#))

What we recommend

We made four recommendations to OSP. OSP agreed with all of our recommendations. The response can be found at the end of the report.

Introduction

Oregon State Police (OSP), through its Patrol Services Division (division), has supported Oregonians by maintaining a presence on the state's roadways for 90 years. Like many agencies, OSP has experienced budget challenges, but its recent work with the Legislature to shore up funding for trooper positions has increased trooper levels from historic lows.

Additionally, scrutiny of policing practices and calls for police reform and more accountability measures have increased across the country. In response, OSP is adding to its diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, including changes to its recruitment and background check processes. OSP should adopt new staffing models that can adapt to the changing law enforcement environment.

This audit focused on the division, and sought to determine whether its workforce planning efforts adequately consider public needs, and trooper safety. The division's primary purpose is to serve as a rural patrol, provide uniform police services on Oregon's 7,000 miles of state and interstate highways, and assist police departments and county sheriffs' offices. With 34 field offices and 522 employees across the state, the division's troopers respond to emergency calls for service on state and interstate highways, and are responsible for crash and crime reduction, among other transportation safety issues.

OSP provides a variety of important public safety services

OSP performs many of the state's policing functions, and collaborates with local and Tribal law enforcement agencies. Oregon differs from other states by providing many policing functions through a single agency. Sworn troopers carry out the division's mission by patrolling Oregon's state and interstate highways, responding to emergency service calls, and reducing crashes and crimes.

OSP has broader responsibilities than many other state highway patrol agencies

OSP was created in 1931. Its mission is to serve all people with a priority of safeguarding life, property, and natural resources by building upon a diverse, professional, and trustworthy workforce. To accomplish this, the agency, among other duties:

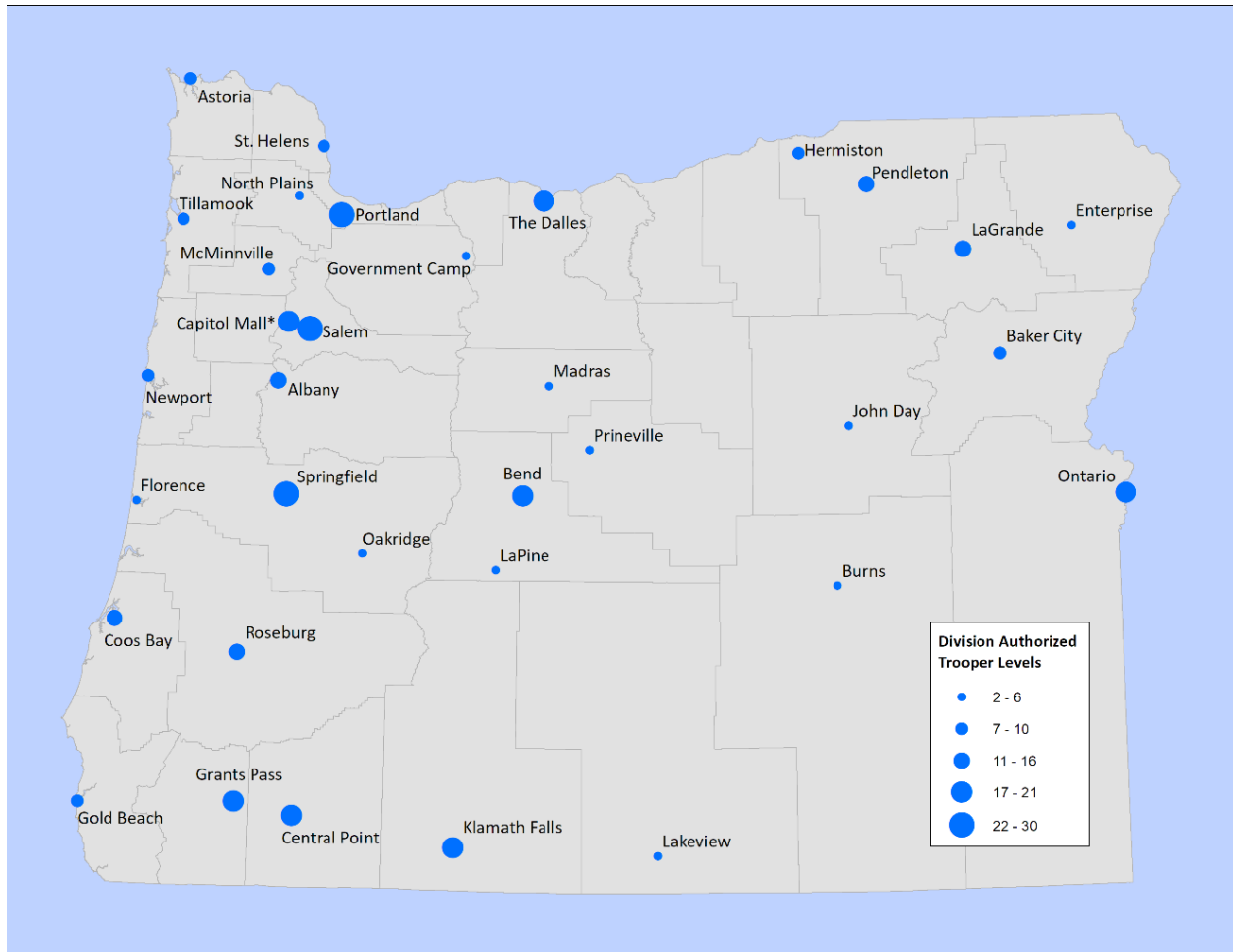
- enforces traffic laws on state roadways;
- investigates and solves crime;
- conducts post-mortem examinations and forensic analyses;
- provides background checks and law enforcement data;
- regulates gaming;¹
- handles hazardous materials and enforces fire codes;
- educates the public on fire safety; and
- enforces fish, wildlife, and natural resource laws.

Oregon is a geographically diverse state with urban, suburban, rural, and remote territory. OSP includes six policing bureaus: Police Services, Field Operations, Public Safety Services, Gaming & Employee

¹ The Gaming Enforcement Division ensures all lottery and Tribal gaming operations are conducted with fairness, integrity, honesty, and security.

Services, Workforce Development & Support, and Forensic Science & Pathology. The Office of the State Fire Marshal is also housed in the agency.²

Figure 1: The Patrol Services Division deploys troopers all over Oregon³



Note: Capitol Mall positions are not included in the division's budget. | Source: OSP

While OSP is charged both with highway patrol and more general law enforcement, some other states house these functions in separate agencies. In these states, a highway patrol agency enforces traffic laws on the highways, while a separate entity (for example, the bureau of investigations) conducts investigations and other law enforcement duties. In this framework, highway patrol officers have limited authority to perform general law enforcement duties, such as investigating crimes occurring in an officer's presence on or near state highways.

For instance, California has numerous state law enforcement agencies: the California Highway Patrol, which is responsible for safety on the state's roadways; the Sergeant-At-Arms, responsible for the safety and security of the State Capitol Building and state officials; the Department of Fish and Wildlife,

² With the passing of House Bill 2927 in 2021, the Office of the State Fire Marshal will become its own state agency beginning July 1, 2023.

³ Numbers of troopers in this figure represent positions authorized in OSP's budget, not actual troopers working in these areas.

which enforces California's Fish and Game code;⁴ the State Fire Marshal, which focuses on fire prevention; the Gambling Control Commission, which regulates gambling, third-party player services, and Tribal casinos; the State Athletic Commission, which regulates professional and amateur boxing, kickboxing, and mixed martial arts; and the Bureau of Investigation, which conducts the state's criminal investigations.

Washington is similar to Oregon in that the Washington State Patrol includes the field patrol function as well as fire protection, forensics laboratory, and investigative services. However, Washington has separate agencies for its fish and wildlife enforcement and gaming commission.

Troopers perform a wide variety of duties, from investigating crimes to patrolling Oregon's roadways

Sworn troopers are instrumental in accomplishing the division's mission. Their responsibilities include crash and crime reduction and response to emergency calls for service on Oregon's state and interstate highways. One of their priorities is to focus on Oregon's "Fatal Five" driving behaviors when patrolling. These behaviors contribute to the majority of vehicle crashes.

Oregon's Fatal Five:

- Speed
- Occupant Safety
- Lane Usage
- Impaired Driving
- Distracted Driving

According to OSP, troopers also provide enforcement of all criminal and motor vehicle laws and investigate crimes and motor vehicle accidents. Troopers are expected to provide fair and impartial police services to all Oregonians, and coordinate police activities with local criminal justice agencies. Troopers conduct enforcement patrols by airplane, pickup truck, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile, bicycle, horseback, an assortment of watercraft, and by standard police vehicles.

Civilian vs. Sworn Employees

Civilian: OSP employs more than 600 non-sworn, or professional civilian, employees to support the agency's mission. Their duties include policy and program analysis, dispatch, forensic science, and automotive maintenance.

Sworn: Sworn law enforcement officers are those who have taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the laws within their agency's jurisdiction. Sworn officers have the responsibility to ensure the safety and quality of life of the community they serve. In Oregon, these individuals have met the state's certification requirements.

Troopers must be prepared to deal with a variety of situations. They may investigate crimes of all types, including domestic violence, missing children, assaults, burglaries, robberies, and homicides. They testify in grand jury proceedings and respond to emergencies and disasters. They also provide general assistance to the public, such as assisting disabled motorists, providing directions, and explaining the law to the public.

Outside patrol, troopers have other ancillary duties. Some of these duties are required, such as preparing for and appearing in court, attending trainings, writing after action reports, and responding to

⁴ California Department of Fish and Wildlife holds law enforcement powers in addition to managing fish and wildlife for the state. Oregon differs in that it assigns the management of fish and wildlife to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, while OSP's Fish and Wildlife Division enforces the laws.

calls for service. Other duties require additional training or certification and may be specialty assignments, including:

- Collision Reconstruction: Investigate motor vehicle collisions and document evidence at crime scenes;
- Drug Recognition Experts (DRE): Provide tools to identify drug-impaired drivers and to help differentiate between drug influence and medical or mental disorders;
- Mobile Response Team (MRT): Provide tactical response to effectively deal with civil unrest;
- Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT): Provide 24-hour tactical assistance to all law enforcement agencies in Oregon;
- K-9 Handler: Provide various services for tracking and detection with dogs;
- Evidence Technician: Manage items of evidence and provides secure storage; and
- Honor Guard: Provide ceremonial services.

While these responsibilities are an inherent component of a trooper's regular duties, they reduce time for patrols and responding to calls for service.

Conversations with a Trooper: Trooper Zachary Cole

Among OSP troopers, there is no such thing as a "typical" day on the job. Troopers may attend to vehicle crashes, address abandoned vehicles, aid stranded motorists, help change tires, serve warrants, respond to calls for service, perform welfare checks, fill out paperwork, and aid local LEAs with robberies or amber alerts. We spoke with three OSP troopers; here are their stories.

Name: Trooper Zachary Cole

How long he has worked for OSP: 6 years

Region: Northwest

Trooper Cole first began patrolling in the Portland area; he now patrols around Mt. Hood and the Government Camp area during the late afternoon and evening shift, his preferred shift. Evenings can "get a little wild" in his area, as there can be DUI and driving complaints.

How the job has changed: Trooper Cole said the legalization of marijuana and minor infractions of other once illegal drugs has changed his job, as they no longer arrest for these anymore.

What he likes about the job: Trooper Cole loves his job — he gets satisfaction from taking impaired drivers off the road, since they are often the reason behind fatal crashes. He enjoys that the job is never the same, there is always variety day to day.

What might surprise people: Trooper Cole said many people report impaired drivers. Some motorists will even follow a suspicious driver until the trooper arrives. When he started, he was surprised at the amount of paperwork troopers have to do. For example, an impaired driver's paperwork is roughly nine-pages and eats up more time than you would expect. Another surprise might be that with the passage of Measure 110, a narcotics violation is less expensive than a speeding ticket for driving 10 miles per hour over the speed limit.



OSP strives to maintain collaborative relationships with local and Tribal law enforcement agencies

Troopers work closely with local law enforcement and periodically rely on them for backup if another trooper is unavailable or too far away to respond. These relationships can result in local law enforcement helping OSP with traffic stops or responding to service calls and large public events such as wildfires, mass casualties, and civil demonstrations, protests, and unrest.

Some local agencies depend heavily on OSP troopers, which raises questions around the equitable use of state police resources. In 2021 legislative testimony, the City of Warrenton police chief said troopers are sometimes the only backup available for serious calls. In the same testimony, the Deschutes County Sheriff stated OSP is the closest and most abundant law enforcement some small communities have. In 2020, the City of Portland relied heavily upon the support of OSP due to civil unrest.

From 2012 until October 2020, OSP's Grants Pass area command, and the Josephine County Sheriff's Office were intertwined. Josephine County relied heavily on OSP to supplement its law enforcement function due to budget cuts that reduced the county's police services. The area command handled the majority of calls for the county for approximately seven years before some funding was restored. Although the county has been reestablishing services, Grants Pass area command still handles the county's calls where a detective is needed.

OSP also maintains relationships with Tribal governments, through OSP's Tribal Gaming Section, Athletic Commission, Fish and Wildlife Division, Fire Marshal's Office, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, Medical Examiner's Office, and many of the area commands. In OSP's 2019 government-to-government agency report, the agency highlighted the interactions between nine of its area command offices and Tribal governments. These interactions included attending meetings and workgroups, sharing information, partnering with the Tribal law enforcement in assisting calls for service, participating in training events hosted by Tribes, narcotic enforcement, and routine patrol coverage.

The state has historically lacked an effective and consistent method for determining and funding OSP trooper staffing levels

In 1980, Oregon voters approved a tax measure to shift OSP's primary funding source to the state General Fund, creating long-standing budget challenges. This change spurred a steady decline in troopers that resulted in an all-time low in staffing during the 2003-05 biennium. For the past few years, OSP and the Legislature have worked to restore trooper staffing levels; however, this effort is hampered by budget challenges which OSP is addressing by using vacant trooper positions to pay for health care costs and administrative support positions.

OSP lacks a dedicated funding source for state troopers

In May 1980, Oregon voters approved Ballot Measure 1, which shifted OSP's primary funding source from the state gas tax to the General Fund. The Patrol Services Division is reliant on the state's General Fund, which puts the agency into competition for funding with larger state agencies including the Department of Education, Oregon Health Authority, and Department of Human Services. State legislators must weigh each agency's specific need for these competitive dollars against the state's needs for their services. The competition for General Fund dollars makes OSP's funding more volatile,

especially during economic downturns. Without a sound and consistent staffing methodology supported by data, the agency's risk of having inadequate resources increases.

Figure 2: OSP 2019-21 agencywide budget (adopted)

Operational Areas	Total Funding ⁵	FTE ⁶
Patrol Services	\$190.1 million	534.25
Fish and Wildlife	\$53.2 million	132.62
Criminal Investigations	\$51.9 million	135.22
Forensic Services	\$52 million	137.76
State Medical Examiner	\$6.2 million	12.50
Agency Support Services	\$55.9 million	147.53
Administrative Services	\$24.6 million	84.49
Criminal Justice Information Systems	\$29.7 million	95.00
Gaming Enforcement	\$12.3 million	36.26
State Fire Marshal	\$29.6 million	66.88
Total	\$505.5 million	1,382.29

Source: Legislative Fiscal Office 2019-21 Legislatively Adopted Budget Detailed Analysis

In the 40 years following the passage of Ballot Measure 1, state trooper staffing levels fell, hitting historic lows in the early 2000s.⁷ Trooper turnover also tends to be high — the job has a shorter “shelf life” than others due to the physical and mental toll of the work.

During this time period, Oregon's population continued to grow. In 1980, the state's population was 2.63 million people, and division staffing was 665 troopers. Forty years later, Oregon's population has nearly doubled to 4.27 million people, while the number of authorized troopers has fallen to 459. However, basing the agency's staffing needs on population levels alone is not a good approach, as discussed in the Audit Results section of this report.

In recent years, OSP has asked for increased financial support from the Legislature

OSP's budget challenges have long been a concern to policymakers in the state, including the Governor, legislators, the Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO), and the Department of Administrative Services Budget and Management Office (BAM). During the past three legislative sessions, lawmakers have increased trooper positions. Additionally, OSP's chief financial officer, along with the LFO and BAM, have been working together to address issues that prevented OSP from hiring all authorized positions — specifically, trooper positions within the Patrol Services Division.

During the 2021 legislative session, OSP received additional funding for a total of 28 trooper positions. This included 10 restorative positions from the now-defunct Oregon State University campus security contract and 18 new, fully funded positions. The 10 positions from the Oregon State University assignment will be allocated to area commands in the Willamette Valley, while the 18 new positions will be included in two Basic Police Academy classes currently scheduled for January and July 2022. OSP will assign those positions to area commands at a later date.

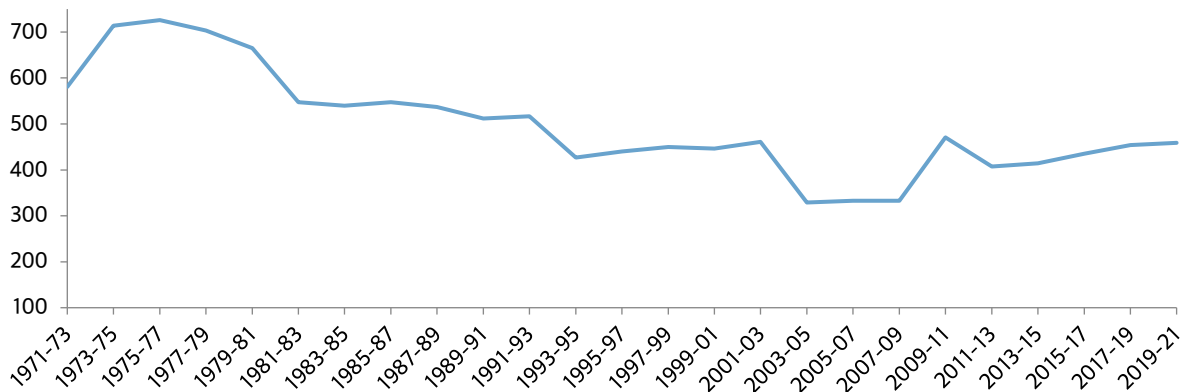
⁵ Funding sources include General Funds, Other Funds, Federal Funds, and Lottery Funds.

⁶ Full-Time Equivalent. Includes both sworn officers and civilian positions.

⁷ The passing of Ballot Measure 1 was not the only factor in staffing reduction, as there was an economic recession in the early 2000s.

Although below the high of 726 positions it once had, Figure 3 shows the division's trooper levels are increasing from the low in 2003. From the 1991-93 through 2019-21 biennia, the division's staffing levels averaged 425 budgeted sworn positions. The division was up to 459 sworn positions in the 2019-21 budget.

Figure 3: Patrol Services Division sworn staffing levels have decreased over the last 50 years



Source: OSP Legislative Testimony for the 2019-21 biennium

OSP has expressed concern these additional positions are not sufficient to effectively execute the division's responsibilities. According to the agency's 2021-2026 5-Year Strategic Roadmap, due to inadequate staffing levels, OSP is challenged in its ability to fulfill its day-to-day responsibilities while simultaneously responding to multiple large-scale incidents.

Measure 110, the state's historic wildfires, civil unrest, and increasing health care costs have placed additional burdens on OSP resources

Beside the challenge of a competitive funding source, OSP has been charged with additional responsibilities, and has faced added burdens on its resources over the last few years. Some of these challenges have been addressed, while others are worth monitoring in the coming years:

Measure 110: In November 2020, Oregon voters approved Measure 110, which decreases the amount of revenue OSP, and other agencies receive from taxes on marijuana sales. This tax revenue was shifted to fund addiction treatment and behavioral health services. Measure 110 would have resulted in a reduction to OSP's budget by about \$40 million over the 2021-23 biennium, and around \$7 million for the rest of fiscal year 2021. However, during the 2021 legislative session, legislators approved additional General Fund monies to backfill OSP's budget for the 2021-23 biennium.⁸

Wildfire and civil unrest response: In December 2020, OSP presented to the Emergency Board the budget impacts to the agency resulting from wildfires in the late summer of 2020, and prolonged civil unrest in the city of Portland. These events totaled over \$3.2 million in unanticipated expenditures. Of that amount, over \$2.5 million was used to cover overtime, travel, personal protective gear, replacement gear, and specialized training costs while OSP responded to civil unrest in the city of

⁸ [2020 Ballot Measure 110](#) requires the Secretary of State to conduct financial and performance audits of the uses and effectiveness by December 31, 2022, and biennially thereafter.

Portland over a four-month period. Roughly \$700,000 was spent on overtime, services, and supplies during the wildfires. The Emergency Board approved the requests for this supplementary funding.



Civil Unrest in Portland, Oregon, June 2020. | Source: OSP

Health care costs: During the 2019-21 biennium, OSP incurred an estimated \$4.9 million in General Fund costs to pay for health care benefit costs that were higher than expected. The Legislature provides about \$1,600 per employee each month to cover health care costs, but employees have choices in their health care plans which may lead to higher costs for agencies. According to OSP, many of its employees choose plans that exceed the amount provided by the Legislature, which the agency has to absorb. Every state agency faces this challenge; generally, the costs either average out due to variability in employee choices or the agency absorbs the costs. According to our calculations, OSP absorbing these costs is equivalent to holding between 11 to 14 trooper positions vacant.

Other states are looking to change how they fund highway patrol functions

Like Oregon, other states have historically struggled to identify and fund state police staffing levels. This challenge has been exacerbated by fluctuations in budget resources. According to the Pew Charitable Trusts, the largest share of funding for highway patrols comes from state resources. The National Conference of State Legislatures reported state highway patrol is funded differently in each state, varying in levels of support from both state and federal funding sources. Twenty-five states use statutory or constitutional state highway fund dollars to pay for their highway patrols. From 2008 through 2016, 14 states, including Washington, were looking at alternative or new funding sources for

their highway patrol functions.⁹ There is no generally recognized national state police funding criteria and model. This adds to the complexity of determining an appropriate number of troopers for OSP.

Conversations with a Trooper: Senior Trooper Dessa DeForest

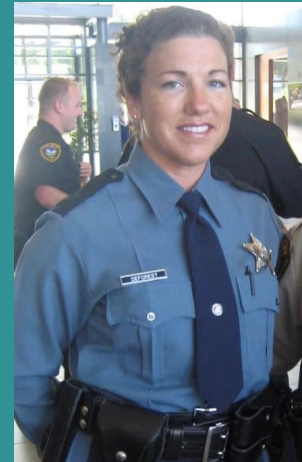
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Name: Senior Trooper Dessa DeForest

How long she has worked for OSP: Over 13 years

Region: Northwest

During her time with OSP, Sr. Trooper DeForest has worked in the lottery and major crimes units, as well as in the dignitary protection unit serving as a bodyguard for Oregon’s Governor. Her typical day starts as soon as she puts on her uniform and walks out her front door to the OSP patrol vehicle parked in her driveway. Throughout the day, she attends to roadways in and around the Portland, Cascade Locks, and Mt. Hood areas. Sr. Trooper DeForest said one most important parts of the job is to deter and remove impaired drivers from the public roadways, especially since the number of impaired drivers has increased over the years.



Patrolling during COVID-19: Sr. Trooper DeForest said it has been difficult to patrol during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many Oregonians are not renewing their vehicle registrations. There have been more hit-and-runs, more angry people accused of menacing behavior (with some instances of individuals flashing weapons at others), and road rage.

How the job has changed: When she started, OSP had 24-hour coverage and there was less traffic. Troopers used to write citations and crash reports by hand. Now, there are more people than ever on the road, and everything is electronic. Troopers are scrutinized more than in the past and everything troopers do is recorded — not just by the agency, but also by the public. For instance, she responded to a call of an individual on an interstate highway who was having a mental health crisis. When people stopped to film the interaction, they placed themselves in danger. She had to make sure everyone was safe and, though her attention was divided, she and other troopers were able to calm the person down and provide them the necessary help.

What she likes about the job: Sr. Trooper DeForest enjoys helping people. She will hand out stickers and bracelets to children, bring baked goods to her co-workers, hand out water, or buy a meal for someone in need. She has helped people turn their lives around. For example, she helped a woman complete her diversion (driving under the influence of intoxicants program) paperwork; this same woman later used Sr. Trooper DeForest as a job reference when applying for flight attendant school. One of her favorite things is being a Drug Recognition Expert, which allows her to assist both OSP and law enforcement agencies to process and evaluate Controlled Substance DUI citations. She trains new officers from around the state in DUI Detection and Standardized Field Sobriety Tests.

What might surprise people: Prior to becoming a trooper, she once lived out of her vehicle with her baby for nine months. She finds sometimes people just need to be heard. Officers tend to meet and handle people “having a bad day,” she said, and they just need to be listened to.

⁹ [National Conference of State Legislatures, 2017](#)

Efforts to improve accountability and equity are the result of public scrutinization of policing practicing

Policing practices are increasingly in the public eye, and members of the public as well as policymakers are calling for more accountability measures. OSP is working to increase its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts by recruiting and adding a new DEI team. The agency has also added body-worn cameras to all its troopers and review processes for handling any use of force incidents.



Recruits during week one OSP pre-Academy, February 2020. | Source: OSP

OSP is working to expand its diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts

OSP's trooper workforce is less diverse than Oregon's population, both in terms of race and ethnicity, and in rural areas. The agency is taking steps to improve its recruitment and retention process so its workforce better reflects the demographics of the state. The agency is also analyzing its interactions with the public in an attempt to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all people. OSP's efforts are outlined in its proposed 2021-23 Affirmative Action Plan.

Figure 4: OSP's workforce does not reflect Oregon's population

Self-Identified Demographics	OSP	State
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	1.0%
Asian	1.5%	4.5%
Black or African American	1.1%	1.9%
Hispanic or Latino	4.2%	13.9%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.4%
Two or more races	1.4%	6.1%
Other	-	0.5%
White	90.9%	71.7%
Total	100%	100%

Note: Used most recent available data, therefore year dates may not align. | Source: OSP – 2021-23 Affirmative Action Plan; State – 2020 US Census “Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino by Race” table

Assessment Techniques, Eleven Dimensions

1. Integrity
2. Impulse Control/Attention to Safety
3. Current Drug Use & Other Risk-Taking Behavior
4. Stress Tolerance
5. Confronting and Overcoming Problems, Obstacles, & Adversity
6. Conscientiousness
7. Interpersonal Skills
8. Decision-Making and Judgment
9. Learning Ability
10. Communication Skills
11. Multiculturalism

According to OSP's 2021-23 affirmative action plan, the agency has in recent years made significant advancements in DEI training and staffing. OSP reports it has focused on educating and encouraging its workforce to embrace inclusion. The agency created an introductory implicit bias training program that has been delivered to more than half of the agency's employees as of February 2021, in addition to participation at the Statewide DEI Conference. During the 2021 legislative session, OSP received approval and funding for a DEI team and additional implicit bias training. The team includes three positions dedicated to continuing and improving OSP's DEI efforts. However, since these are new changes, it is too early to evaluate their impact on the agency.

Additionally, the agency has revamped its recruitment approach, by increasing recruiting efforts at institutions with high percentages of people that represent the language, ethnic, and socioeconomic makeup of Oregon, incorporating Hispanic-serving

institutions and historically black colleges into the regular rotation of visits, training employees to understand the cultural dynamics to recruiting underrepresented populations, and building relationships with Tribal youth across Oregon.

OSP also has an extensive process to check a potential new recruit's background, including a psychological examination of candidates that tries to identify candidate's biases.

Performed since 2003 by psychologist consultants, the screening techniques have traditionally included ten dimensions.¹⁰ OSP has adapted these dimensions for its psychological evaluation process and has recently requested the psychologist consultants add an 11th dimension based on multiculturalism. This dimension, previously included under communication skills, involves the recognition of how race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, class status, education, religious or spiritual orientation, and other cultural factors play out in individuals and society, as well as how the candidate is influenced by their own unique identity. After the examination, the psychologist issues OSP a report indicating whether a candidate is qualified based on the results of the evaluation.

According to one of the consultant psychologists, the psychological examination alone will not necessarily expose a candidate's bias. If someone wants to hide a discriminatory leaning, they can. According to the psychologist, if a candidate sees the pattern of the questions, the person could adapt the answers to address the bias. However, a mitigating factor is a deep dive during the background check that will pick up a bias leaning. Furthermore, while one round of background reference interviews might not uncover biases, a second or third round of interviews could pick up inconsistencies and do more to identify biases.

Even though OSP has been conducting these psychological screenings since 2003, Oregon statute did not require OSP or local law enforcement agencies to perform them until 2019. Additionally, the law

¹⁰ California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, [Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual](#).

does not include what the agency must do with the exam results. The consultant psychologist stated this lack of requirement seems to make Oregon's approach one of the weakest in the country.

Policing practices are under increasing scrutiny

Policing practices have long been under scrutiny, often prompted by outrage at police actions perpetrated against people of color. For example, the Watts Riots in August 1965 started with a traffic stop of a young Black man in Los Angeles and ended in six days of civil unrest that led to 34 deaths and \$40 million of property damage. In April 1992, fury over the acquittal of four Los Angeles police officers who had beaten Rodney King spilled into the Los Angeles streets and ignited a national conversation about police use of force. The murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer in May 2020 led to months of unrest in at least 140 U.S. cities, including several in Oregon and additional discussion of police reforms.

Oregon's Governor authorized OSP and the Oregon National Guard to respond to civil unrest in downtown Portland. In September 2020, the Governor declared a state of emergency in Portland to allow authorities to better respond to the events. An OSP official told the audit team they had 31 nights of Portland riot response between May 30, 2020 and September 30, 2020. Between 50 and 100 Mobile Response Team, SWAT, troopers, and supervisors responded each night, with the bulk of the response happening in June and August.

Portland was not the only Oregon city affected by protests and civil unrest. For example, in Salem, at the state capitol building, and in Ontario in eastern Oregon, law enforcement, including OSP responded to protests and civil unrest. During this period, there was increased state and national media coverage for police response to these events.

Accountability measures are critical to public safety

Use of Force

This is the amount of effort required by police to compel compliance by an unwilling subject.

Source: The International Association of Chiefs of Police

Following the events of 2020, the law enforcement profession has faced public demands for police reforms and increased accountability. In 2020 and 2021 Oregon lawmakers passed many bills aimed at police reforms.

OSP has had some measures in place for years. The agency has been collecting traffic stop and use of force data for at least 10 years and has been using in-car video systems for nearly 10 years. OSP also created the Car Care Program promoting education over enforcement and has incrementally deployed body-worn cameras for sworn officers.

As of September 2021, all sworn OSP staff carry body cameras and are expected to comply with agency policies regarding their use. During the 2021 legislative session, OSP received funding for both body-worn cameras and video storage.

While body-worn cameras help with accountability, improving officer conduct and training is important not only for accountability, but to prevent poor behavior in the first place. One of the controls to help ensure correct conduct is police academy training, which all new law enforcement recruits across the state must attend. This training is 16 weeks and involves CPR, first aid, de-escalation education, survival skills, firearms use, and use of force education.

Use of Force may include:

- Physical Control: Using empty hand tactics such as wrist locks, control holds, and takedowns
- Empty Handed Strikes: Punching or kicking with no weapon
- Chemical Agents: Releasing an irritant, such as pepper spray
- Impact Weapons: Hitting with a baton; may include using an object such as a flashlight as a weapon
- Firearms: Discharging a firearm at a subject
- Canine Bite: Bites from a police dog
- Extended Range Impact Weapons: Discharging a firearm that uses less lethal projectiles (“bean-bag gun”)
- Vehicle Intervention: Using a police vehicle to deflect a subject’s vehicle; using spike strips to stop a vehicle
- Conducted Energy Devices: Immobilizing a subject with a taser-like device by discharging a high-voltage, low-amperage jolt of electricity at a distance

OSP also provides six weeks of pre-academy training and 16 weeks of post-academy, including on-the-job training under the supervision of a training trooper. Altogether, these 38 weeks provide sworn staff with the baseline training needed to patrol on their own. Sworn staff are required to have ongoing training as a part of their certification. The ongoing training includes a required eight hours a year of use of force training, and about 12 hours a year of de-escalation training.

After action reports may help ensure officer accountability. These reports contain information on the type of incident and whether the officer’s actions met standards. Details provided by the officers involved include the decision factors on use of force during the incident. Once the report is completed, it goes to the sergeant or supervisor, who reviews the report to confirm if the use of force was applied appropriately. The report is then passed on to the area’s lieutenant and captain, major of field operations, and the Office of Professional Standards. A part of the report review includes assessing whether there is a need for the trooper to receive additional coaching or corrective action. According to OSP, from 2012-19, on average, use of force occurred 1 out of every 1,635 enforcement contacts.¹¹

While not the focus of this audit, we observed the use of force incidents are codified into an internal report each year and placed into an internal dashboard to identify trends and areas to address. Although the reports are not released to the public, the agency does release high-level summaries in response to public records requests.

Aside from the lack of public availability, one other issue we observed pertains to demographic information in the reports. Specifically, the race and gender metrics are based solely on trooper observation and interpretation, which could result in erroneous data collection.

Additional law enforcement accountability measures OSP has implemented since 2016 include:

- Developing and implementing policies on pursuit and use of force;
- Training regarding implicit bias and failure to act scenarios;
- Setting agency strategic direction and compiling a five-year strategic plan document;
- Expanding community involvement by participating in the statewide diversity council, giving presentations on OSP involvement in civil unrest events, attending the Black Student Summit, Hispanic Heritage Breakfasts, and the Portland and Bend Pride parades; and

¹¹ Via OSP’s 2019 Traffic Stop Data Collection and Use of Force Report.

- Enhancing statistical transparency by conducting a use of force survey and data review and creating a patrol activity dashboard.

The Oregon Audits Division released an audit of the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, use of force regarding training provided during the Basic Police Academy and police accountability. Review of police use of force was included in the audit.¹² OSP was included in the scope of that work, and any recommendations stemming from that report could impact OSP as it recruits and trains troopers.

Conversations with a Trooper: Senior Trooper Ryan Sharp

Among OSP troopers, there is no such thing as a “typical” day on the job. Troopers may attend to vehicle crashes, address abandoned vehicles, aid stranded motorists, help change tires, serve warrants, respond to calls for service, perform welfare checks, fill out paperwork, and aid local LEAs with robberies or amber alerts. We spoke with three OSP troopers; here are their stories.

Name: Senior Trooper Ryan Sharp

How long he has worked for OSP: 13 years

Region: East

Sr. Trooper Sharp has been an OSP trooper in both the Patrol and Fish & Wildlife Divisions. Currently, he works dayshift, patrolling and enforcing speed limits on I-84 in Umatilla and Morrow counties. Patrolling in rural Oregon can be challenging; there is not a SWAT team to help handle situations, so OSP troopers need to be ready to respond to all kinds of situations.



How the job has changed: The job is always changing. When he first started, they did not have computers in the vehicles. They mostly used radios, but now the vehicles are fully equipped. Crime laws and policies have changed. With the legalization of marijuana and changes to what OSP can pursue, troopers' mindsets and approaches must constantly shift. During the last year, he has noticed attitudes toward troopers have changed to more of an anti-police sentiment.

What he likes about the job: Sr. Trooper Sharp enjoys feeling he has made a difference. He feels one of the best parts of the job is helping people. He is also part of the MRT and even though it is not easy, it is a rewarding part of the job. When he was deployed in the Portland area during the civil unrest, people would line the streets and cheer when his team's truck drove past and that felt good knowing they had that positive response.

What might surprise people: The public thinks OSP is just a highway patrol, which is not the case. If a vehicle is broken down on the side of the road, it is within the trooper's job to serve and help the person in the vehicle. He dislikes writing citations, so he might choose instead to issue a warning. Troopers are not there to “ruin people's day.” Also, contrary to public belief, there are no quotas for tickets.

¹² [Report 2021-35](#): Additional Resources Needed to Strengthen Police Training and Accountability

Audit Results

While the Legislature is the body that approves agency budget and staffing levels, agencies are responsible for putting those resources to work. We found while there is no universal best practice, generally accepted staffing models, academic research, or national criteria for the number of law enforcement officers for any one agency, the number of troopers OSP currently deploys does not appear to be sufficient to address its current duties. We also found OSP can improve how it assesses staffing needs by analyzing workload (time-based) data when preparing budget information for the Legislature. The agency can also better equip area commanders to deploy troopers where they are needed most by establishing and documenting a consistent approach for shift schedule development.

OSP should enhance its workforce planning methodology and analytics

To understand whether an entity has sufficient staffing, those responsible must understand the requirements and expectations of their organization. Most agencies receive their purpose and duties from state statutes and the resources to accomplish those duties from the Legislature's biennial budget.

Though the Legislature appropriates resources, it is the responsibility of OSP to determine its staffing needs, including accounting for factors which affect the demand for OSP's services. While the agency is tracking and analyzing these demands, we identified some elements missing from these analyses that, if implemented, could allow OSP to better understand its staffing needs and leverage existing troopers to promote greater public safety.

OSP's current method for determining staffing needs is among the least effective available and does not account for Oregon's changing policing environment

Staffing law enforcement agencies is complex and challenging. In Oregon, there are many types of law enforcement agencies, including: OSP, county sheriffs, city police, Tribal police, and federal agencies like the FBI and the Secret Service. Regardless of the type of law enforcement agency or jurisdiction, there is no universal best practice, generally accepted staffing models, academic research, or national criteria for the number of law enforcement officers for any one agency.¹³

Because of the eclectic differences between law enforcement agencies and the lack of industry guidance, law enforcement agencies need to adopt staffing methodologies based on factors specific to their areas of jurisdiction and responsibility. Law enforcement agencies have various service requirements and functions, and their jurisdictions have distinct demographic traits and characteristics, all of which must be accounted for when determining the sufficient number of staff for their jurisdiction. It is due to these differences that comparisons of staffing levels between law enforcement agencies is not very useful.

¹³ The FBI gathers and publishes data on the number of full-time law enforcement officers per 1,000 inhabitants for some jurisdictions. Within its publications, however, the FBI cautions users from making comparisons, even going so far as to warn users the data should not be interpreted as preferred staffing levels recommended by the FBI.

While there is no “one size fits all” number dictating the proper number of law enforcement officers for a jurisdiction, there are analytical methods that can help agencies quantitatively understand the need for their services. In 2014, Oxford University Press published a study on police staffing allocation and managing workload demand.¹⁴ In the study, authors reviewed typical staffing approaches, interviewed law enforcement agencies, and conducted a focus group with staffing experts. They concluded police agencies generally use one of four approaches to determining workforce levels, and while each method has strengths and weaknesses, a workload (time) based approach is preferable to others that might not account for environmental and agency-specific variables. The table on page 17 highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

OSP has also provided other analyses to the Legislature to support Patrol Services Division staffing increase requests, including analyses showing how traffic fatalities and crashes have increased and how response times have gone up compared to periods when the agency had more troopers. OSP leadership has also spoken to the safety impacts on troopers by citing longer times for backup to arrive or troopers working with no backup. However, when analyzing its staffing needs and presenting them to the Legislature, OSP emphasizes a staffing approach using the per capita method, and frequently compares itself to other states.¹⁵

Per Capita Method

This method is generally recognized as the weakest of the available staffing calculation methods.

As noted in the table below, this approach has considerable drawbacks. In fact, the per capita method is generally recognized as the weakest of the available methods to calculate staffing needs. Despite having many of the data available within its own information systems, OSP does not use workload-based or time-based data to analyze and develop its division staffing budget requests.

A workload (time) based analysis involves tracking and analyzing measurable tasks troopers conduct during their shifts and then comparing it to the time troopers have available. The analysis should also account for common reasons troopers are taken off the road, such as training and actual paid time off. The difference between workload demand and trooper capacity may reveal a surplus, which could suggest an excess of staffing. Alternatively, the analysis may show there is more work than trooper time. In that case, the analysis can also help OSP estimate how many additional positions it would need to cover that deficit. As highlighted by the authors in the Oxford assessment of police staffing approaches, a workload (time) based approach would also allow OSP to account for variables within each area command and grants the agency flexibility to alter its approach in response to police reform which may change the expectations and demands of policing. OSP should include this method when developing its staffing needs.

¹⁴ [Police Staffing Allocation and Managing Workload Demand](#): A Critical Assessment of Existing Practices, Oxford University Press, 2014.

¹⁵ OSP has also incorporated the minimum staffing approach when estimating the number of troopers it would need to restore and maintain 24-hour coverage.

There are four common workforce determination approaches

	Workload-based (Time-based)	Minimum Staffing	Authorized Level	Per Capita
Description	A comprehensive attempt to determine appropriate workforce levels by considering actual workload based on demand for service indicators.	Requires an estimation of the sufficient number of officers to have on duty at a given time to maintain officer safety and provide an adequate level of protection to the public.	Uses budget allocations to specify how many officers may be allocated to an agency.	Agencies determine an optimum number of officers per person, then project that figure to the total population of its jurisdiction.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimates are developed by modeling current activities, which can assist in determining the need for more or reallocation of existing resources. Can be performed at every level and for all functions of a law enforcement agency. Codified as a standard by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Is the most preferred of the approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input data such as population, calls for service, crime rate, etc., are readily available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driven by resource availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readily available data and regularly updated. Simple to calculate and understand. Can allow communities to compare themselves with those they believe are similar.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No universal method for conducting a workload-based assessment. Connecting staffing decisions to calls for service and time required to complete them could disincentivize employees' timeliness. Learning to conduct workload-based assessments may be challenging, as they can be complex. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no objective standards for setting minimum staffing levels. Can result in erroneous staffing levels if agencies do not employ a factual basis for making staffing decisions. Can lead to unwarranted overtime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenced by political decision-making. Reflects incremental budgeting processes instead of identifiable criteria such as calls for service, community expectations, or efficiency analyses. Can become an artificial benchmark for actual need and create a misperception that an agency is understaffed if the number of officers does not meet authorized levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no generally accepted benchmark for optimum staffing levels. Can result in biased estimates. Does not account for intensity of workload, variations in policing style, response to crime, and differences in communities. Called an "inappropriate basis for staffing decisions" by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Area commands are not consistently conducting and documenting trooper deployment analyses

State agencies receive their purpose and responsibilities from the state constitution and statutes, while the Legislature appropriates funds to accomplish those duties. However, once budgets are approved, and agencies switch their focus to service delivery, demand for services can cause OSP to shift where they deploy their resources in the state.

Members of OSP leadership team regularly meet to decide where OSP will deploy troopers. During these monthly meetings, leadership discusses staffing needs to address retirements, vacancies, and workload demands. Agency leadership also reviews data including calls for service, crashes, fatal crashes, weather-related events, the trooper transfer list, and the incoming recruits due to complete the Basic Police Academy. Upon considering all these factors, leadership assigns troopers to areas.

Once resources are allocated, OSP leadership expects area commanders to develop a schedule for the troopers to ensure there are sufficient resources during the highest demand times, and to respond to emerging events. We interviewed area commanders across the state to determine how they allocate their troopers. We found while area commanders are required to develop these schedules, there is no consistent method, criteria, or format for these schedules.



Trooper provides gas during winter 2019 snow event. | Source: OSP

For example, area commanders are expected to consult the department's patrol activity data for their assigned areas, along with Oregon Department of Transportation crash data in an effort to assess risks and the level of need on a given time and day. However, this expectation is verbally communicated, instead of being documented in agency policies and procedures. We also found there is no requirement to document these plans, or the methodology used to create them; in some area commands, a verbal review with the Region Captain is all that is required for approval.

The shortcomings of this process are the result of three fundamental flaws. First, OSP has not developed a process laying out how these analyses are to be completed. Second, OSP has not set formal expectations that area commanders follow a uniform process. Third, OSP has not trained area commanders on how to conduct these analyses.

OSP does have a tool area commanders can utilize to build a patrol schedule. An area commander within the division used a tool he brought from another law enforcement agency and adapted it to work for his area command. The tool incorporates data from calls for service and crash data, among other inputs, to develop the shifts. The area commander shared the tool with the Region Captain, who asked the rest of his area commanders to also use it. OSP could revise this tool as needed, train area commanders how to use it, and then set formal expectations they follow this process when developing workload analyses.

Determining appropriate trooper staffing levels is critical for both officer and public safety

Troopers and the public may face safety risks resulting from lower staffing levels. As many organizations have found since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, OSP troopers needed to take additional time off. In addition, the wildfires and civil unrest of 2020 increased the demands on troopers, adding additional stressors on staff and further stretching the already thin resources of the division.

Though not all troopers were called to respond to the protests and riots beginning in May 2020, many troopers were affected. Many area commands sent troopers to Portland and Salem, leaving the remaining troopers to cover the gaps in schedules. Due to position vacancies, scheduling holes, and those on special assignment, certain areas were left to operate with fewer troopers, some with only a single trooper. These impacts came at a time when 10% of the division's calls for service went unanswered due to troopers being unavailable, and 24-hour coverage was not possible.

Many troopers work alone in large, rural areas. As a result, backup, which might be another trooper or local law enforcement officer, can be more than 30 minutes away. This can be dangerous for both the trooper and the public. Area commanders expressed concern for their troopers and the potential impacts to the public. Working alone, with limited or no immediate backup, can lead to trooper fatigue, both mental and physical. Fatigue could make troopers more prone to mistakes and accidents, place them at higher risk of injury or death, lead to burnout resulting in resignation or early retirement, and increase leave time usage. Additionally, some studies have assessed how fatigue effects police use of force. These studies found officer decision-making and reaction time can be impaired when facing deadly-force situations while fatigued.



Trooper uses a Mobile Data Terminal. | Source: OSP

Lower staffing levels in the Patrol Services Division are also likely to affect public safety. For example, fewer troopers on the road can lead to increased traffic accidents, injury, or even loss of life. Fatalities on Oregon's highways have increased since the early 2010s. According to the Oregon Department of Transportation, from 2010 to 2018, total fatalities on Oregon highways increased by 61%. One of OSP's key performance measures is to help reduce fatal crashes on Oregon's state and interstate highways, however, crashes have exceeded the target goals and generally continue to increase.

From 2009 to 2019 in Oregon, 2,531 vehicle occupants were killed.¹⁶ In 2018, the Centers for Disease Control reported 480 people in Oregon were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes, and those traffic crash deaths totaled about \$640 million in medical and work loss costs. Nationally, motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for people aged one to 54.

Additionally, research shows traffic accidents account for approximately 25% of highway system congestion, and motor vehicle traffic injuries are one of Oregon's leading causes of death and hospitalization.

While it is unclear how many troopers OSP actually needs, it does not appear OSP currently has enough to accomplish all of its broad and varied duties in a safe and timely manner. Additionally, increased trooper presence on state highways and interstates may reduce accidents and fatalities.

OSP could improve its analysis of historical overtime usage

Overtime is a practice common in law enforcement that pays troopers a premium wage for hours worked above their normal schedule. OSP has two overtime options: regular overtime, in which OSP

¹⁶ [According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) for all Oregon roads.

budgets hours every month for every trooper position it has, and grant overtime. Analyzing overtime usage is one of the main ways to control overtime and ensure it is used responsibly. However, OSP has not developed a consistent method to do this, though it has developed the datapoints needed to perform this analysis.

Troopers can work budgeted or grant-funded overtime

OSP makes two types of overtime available to its troopers. The first is what OSP calls regular overtime, meaning the extra hours worked beyond a set schedule. The second type of overtime is grant, in which entities like the Oregon Department of Transportation reimburse OSP for trooper time spent enforcing things like speeds in construction zones, seatbelt use, distracted driving, and others. Regardless of the type of overtime worked, using it requires supervisor approval.



Portland's Lieutenant Huskey helps change a tire, summer 2021. | Source: OSP

Though approval is required, and overtime must serve an operational need, the amount troopers may work has some limits. The collective bargaining agreement between the State of Oregon and the Oregon State Police Officers Association dictates a trooper is entitled to a safety release period of eight consecutive hours if they have worked 18 or more hours in a 24-hour period. This release is intended to give a trooper the opportunity to rest when workload requires additional trooper response. If OSP cannot give a trooper the safety release, they are paid the overtime rate for all hours worked until they receive the safety release. OSP does not have to pay a trooper this leave if the safety release would occur during the trooper's regular time off. Aside from this protection for the trooper,

the collective bargaining agreement has no other restrictions on the amount of overtime a trooper may work.

Analyzing overtime data could reveal patterns in how it is used, and inform future budget requests

The primary means of controlling overtime in law enforcement are to record, analyze, manage, and supervise its use. OSP performs all of these in some fashion. For example, it creates and uses different pay codes when recording overtime so it can track use by type (regular and grant) and specific events like civil unrest response and wildfires. In addition, OSP's chief financial office creates overtime use reports and distributes them to the area commands in an effort to help manage overtime. Finally, supervisors in the area commands review trooper timecards to ensure overtime met an operational need.

However, we found OSP does not consistently analyze overtime data for usage and other potential insights. While OSP supervisors are reviewing timecards and overtime reports, these administrative functions lack the insight a deeper level of analysis can provide. Data-driven analyses would allow law enforcement agencies to assess whether overtime costs justify the work done, if an agency has the capacity to pay for overtime, and identify potential overtime abuse. It also gives an agency insight into what events commonly generate overtime, how much overtime those events require, and how frequently overtime is needed.



Highway 22 near Aumsville during January 2021 snowstorm. | Source: OSP

By not consistently analyzing overtime, OSP is missing the opportunity to enhance its management and supervision of overtime, as well as improving future budget requests for overtime funding. Budget requests built on historical overtime needs could help prevent cash flow issues that could arise if OSP does not have the resources it needs for anticipated overtime. As noted earlier in the report, overtime from unexpected events such as wildfires and civil unrest is addressed through Emergency Board actions.

We requested division overtime data from OSP, including monthly overtime usage and costs from July 2019 through June 2021. During that time, the division's regular overtime use averaged 4,902 hours per month.¹⁷ Monthly overtime use is not consistent, and can fluctuate due to unexpected events, but understanding the average need over a period of time is useful for budget development and staffing decisions.

OSP uses trooper positions as a flexible funding source for other needs

Position vacancies are extremely common in government, and they occur for a variety of reasons — people resign, retire, or transition to other employers. While agencies generally work to fill most vacancies, there are times where agencies will leave positions vacant for strategic purposes. As discussed in our 2019 audit on budget transparency, agencies commonly use vacancies to fund their operations. For example, agencies hold positions vacant in one area to pay for positions in another area. While this practice provides an agency with some flexibility, we concluded it complicates determining agency priorities and evaluating performance.¹⁸

OSP also uses these budget practices. In fact, despite the staffing issues previously discussed in this report, we learned OSP uses trooper position funding — specifically vacancy savings — to fund other agency positions and expenses.

In addition to the vacancies OSP is using to cover health care costs, it is also holding some trooper positions vacant to pay for double-filled administrative positions like those in human resources and its budget office.¹⁹ Among these are administrative positions OSP had to eliminate due to 2003 legislative budget cuts. Though OSP requested funding to restore these positions in its 2021-23 budget request, only a few of the positions were approved. These positions are foundational to OSP's administrative functions.

¹⁷ These calculations include the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic, and periods when Oregon experienced catastrophic wildfires, and civil unrest. During this timeframe, there were months when OSP's regular OT use was less than normal. Prior to these events, OSP's regular OT use averaged 61% of its budgeted amount.

¹⁸ [Report 2019-29](#): Enhanced Transparency in Key Budget Practices Would Improve Governance and Inform Decision-Making for State Spending

¹⁹ Double-filling is a practice in which an agency places more than one employee in a single position. These are often used to address a short-term increase in workload, ensuring a smooth transition with an upcoming retirement, or succession planning.

Recommendations

To improve trooper staffing analyses, promote public safety, and make the best use of budgeted resources, OSP should:

1. Use available time-based data to analyze the Patrol Services Division's workload and include the results when presenting budget requests to the Legislature.
2. Continue working with the Legislature to appropriately fund administrative support positions and fill vacant trooper positions.
3. Create a standardized methodology and process for conducting workload analyses at the area level, train the appropriate staff to conduct them, and incorporate them into the Patrol Services Division's scheduling plan.
4. Develop processes to regularly analyze overtime usage for improved efficiency.

While not within the audit's scope owing to the fluid and evolving nature of police reform and accountability efforts, OSP should account for the changing law enforcement environment within its staffing strategy and methodology including assessing whether all current duties are aligned with the evolving nature of state policing public policy.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Objective

The objective of this audit sought to determine whether the Patrol Services Division's workforce planning efforts adequately consider public needs and trooper safety.

Scope

The audit focused on OSP's efforts to analyze the division's need for and deployment of trooper workforce resources, and how it plans and uses overtime. The audit also included efforts to assess how duties from other OSP programs impacted resource levels in the division.

Methodology

To address our audit objectives, auditors used a methodology that included, but was not limited to, interviews with key staff, reviewing relevant laws, rules, OSP generated analyses, and other documentation. Auditors also reviewed criteria regarding workforce planning, overtime use, and police staffing.

To learn about the views, opinions, and perspectives of the auditee and some stakeholders, we conducted interviews with staff at OSP, the LFO, the Department of Administrative Services Office of Budget and Management, the Governor's Office, and the Oregon State Police Officers Association.

We documented and analyzed relevant statutes, legislative hearings and testimony, budgets dating back to 1951, public reports, and OSP overtime data.

Internal control review

We determined the following internal controls were relevant to our audit objective.²⁰

- Control Environment
 - Has management established an organizational structure, assigned responsibility, and delegated authority to achieve the entity's objectives?
 - Has management demonstrated a commitment to recruit, develop, and retain competent individuals?
- Risk Assessment
 - Has management defined objectives clearly to enable the identification of risks and define risk tolerances?
 - Has management identified, analyzed, and responded to risks related to achieving the defined objectives?
 - Has management identified, analyzed, and responded to significant changes that could impact the internal control system?
- Control activities

²⁰ Auditors relied on standards for internal controls from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, report [GAO-14-704G](#).

- Has management designed control activities to achieve objectives and respond to risks?
- Has management designed the entity's information system and related control activities to achieve objectives and respond to risks?
- Has management implemented control activities through policies?
- Information and communication
 - Does management use quality information to achieve the entity's objectives?
 - Has management internally communicated the necessary quality information to achieve the entity's objectives?
 - Has management externally communicated the necessary quality information to achieve the entity's objectives?
- Monitoring activities
 - Has management established and operated monitoring activities to monitor the internal control system and evaluate the results?
 - Has management remediated identified internal control deficiencies on a timely basis?

Deficiencies with these internal controls were documented in the results section of this report.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

We sincerely appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended by officials and employees of OSP during the course of this audit.

Audit team

Ian Green, M.Econ, CGAP, CFE, CISA, CIA, Audit Manager
 Kyle Rossi, Principal Auditor
 Nicole Barrett, MPA, Staff Auditor

About the Secretary of State Audits Division

The Oregon Constitution provides that the Secretary of State shall be, by virtue of the office, Auditor of Public Accounts. The Audits Division performs this duty. The division reports to the elected Secretary of State and is independent of other agencies within the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of Oregon government. The division has constitutional authority to audit all state officers, agencies, boards and commissions as well as administer municipal audit law.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon State Police

General Headquarters
3565 Trelstad Ave SE
Salem, OR 97317
Voice: 503-378-3720
Fax: 503-378-8282
TTY: 503-585-1452

January 11, 2022

Mr. Kip Memmott, Director
Secretary of State, Audits Division
255 Capitol St. NE Suite 500
Salem, OR 97310

Mr. Memmott,

This letter provides a written response to the Audits Division's final draft audit report titled *"Additional Data Analytics Could Better Determine Trooper Staffing Levels and Resource Needs"*.

I would like to begin by communicating to you and the audit team the Department's appreciation of the investment made in the examination of the models and practices utilized by the Patrol Division in determining staffing needs and deployment. The Mission of Oregon State Police is to serve all people with a priority of safeguarding life, property, and natural resources by building upon a diverse, professional, and trustworthy workforce. Our values: Loyalty, Dedication, Compassion, Integrity and Honor, represent the "moral compass" of our agency. Accomplishing this mission is dependent on the deployment of highly trained, competent and professional Troopers across all areas of the state.

After a review of the audit, the Department generally agrees with recommendations made by auditors. We also agree that implementing some of the recommendations will help provide standardized expectations of area commanders and paint a clearer picture of the staffing resources needed to provide the services expected from the department.

Below is our detailed response to each recommendation in the audit.

RECOMMENDATION 1		
Use available time based data to analyze the Patrol Division's workload and include the results when presenting budget requests to the legislature.		
Agree or Disagree with Recommendation	Target date to complete implementation activities	Name and phone number of specific point of contact for implementation
Generally Agree	2023-2025 Budget cycle	Cord Wood, Captain 503-378-3720

Narrative for Recommendation 1

Over the previous two budget cycles, the Department has used two different staffing models discussed in the audit report to illustrate staffing needs. For the 2017-2019 budget cycle, the Department presented information based on a 24-hr coverage staffing model. For the 2019-2021 budget cycle, the Department used a per capita model for staffing, which the Department felt illustrated the stark difference in Oregon State Police staffing when compared to similar law

enforcement agencies with parallel responsibilities. Both models illustrated the Department needs additional staffing resources.

The Department generally agrees there is benefit to making better use of available data and will explore alternative data analysis models to examine workloads and staffing needs in Area Commands across the state. An analysis of demand for service indicators does reveal the baseline number of outputs requested in an Area Command. This data can be used to deploy available staff during times of peak demand. However, time based-data, while useful in extrapolating baseline demands for service and peak days/times, is only one element of the information needed to determine staffing needs for legislative budget requests.

A weakness of time-based analysis is the assumption that all calls for service are equal, and require the same resources for every event. Time-based analysis also tends to focus on the number of outputs processed over a defined period, missing the outcomes that are so important to public safety. Time based analysis alone also misses important factors such as show-up rate, proactive enforcement time, patrol area size, and other responsibilities of staff beyond responses to calls for service.

To overcome the shortcomings of time-based analysis, the Department may also consider combining time-based workload, with other qualitative approaches to gain more holistic view of the demands placed on staff, and overcome shortcomings of this model of analysis. The Department will work toward refining processes that synthesize quantitative and qualitative data to be presented with budget requests to the legislature.

RECOMMENDATION 2 Continue working with the Legislature to appropriately fund administrative support positions and fill vacant trooper positions.		
Agree or Disagree with Recommendation	Target date to complete implementation activities	Name and phone number of specific point of contact for implementation
Generally Agree	End of 2023-2025 Budget Cycle	Cord Wood, Captain 503-378-3720

Narrative for Recommendation 2

The Department agrees with the auditors of the importance of administrative positions, and the role they have in support sworn Trooper positions and the overall function/mission of Patrol Division and Department. Without the services our support staff perform, sworn Troopers could not be responding to emergency and nonemergency calls for service received every day.

The Department continues to refine our processes to recruit and retain our staff. The Department opened a full time/continuous Trooper recruitment process in November 2021. Recently the department has explored new strategies for finding recruits, actively pursuing opportunities to hire the most qualified, diverse and capable workforce possible. At the same time, the Department has shortened the duration of the recruiting process, and opened processes to recruiting certified/trained police officers to reduce field-training times. The Department is also in the process of launching multiple health and wellness initiatives to help retain current staff and reduce the openings needing filled.

The Department will continue to seek legislative support and continued appropriate funding of the both non-sworn/administrative positions, Trooper positions, and initiatives to retain sworn and non-sworn staff.

RECOMMENDATION 3 Create a standardized methodology and process for conducting workload analyses at the area level, train the appropriate staff to conduct them, and incorporate them into the Patrol Services Division's scheduling plan.		
Agree or Disagree with Recommendation	Target date to complete implementation activities	Name and phone number of specific point of contact for implementation
Generally Agree	June 2022	Cord Wood, Captain 503-378-3720

Narrative for Recommendation 3

The Department has always maintained the expectation for Area Commanders to consult the available workload data when developing staff deployment schedules. The current direction for Area Commanders is that data will be examined on a quarterly basis, to look for developing trends in crashes and calls for service. While reviewing call for service and workload data has been the expectation, the Department has not developed and implemented a formalized process for documenting this process.

The Department will continue to develop and refine a standardized methodology for Area Commanders for use in assessing workload for the development of Patrol staff schedules. This process will likely include considerations for standardized format, data sets, data access and training for staff. As mentioned in the audit report, a version of a more standardized workload analysis was adopted by some, but not all Area Commands across the state. An improved data dashboard has recently been placed into service to give all supervisors, including Area Commanders, easier access to more data to analyze the workload of their area commands. The Patrol Division will look for more opportunities to refine and further develop a standardized workload analysis and train appropriate staff to complete these analyses in conjunction with the annual shift selection process.

RECOMMENDATION 4 Develop processes to regularly analyze overtime usage for improved efficiency.		
Agree or Disagree with Recommendation	Target date to complete implementation activities	Name and phone number of specific point of contact for implementation
Generally Agree	July 2023	Cord Wood, Captain 503-378-3720

Narrative for Recommendation 4

Currently the Department has a check and balances system in place to minimize the opportunities for abuse of overtime. First, staff are required to obtain the authorization of a supervisor prior to working overtime. Any overtime hours claimed by an employee during a pay period are reviewed and approved by a supervisor as part of the monthly time card review process. The system is designed to limit opportunities for abuse or misuse of overtime.

The Department recognizes the benefit of regular analysis of overtime use and being transparent stewards of public funding. Examination of the use of overtime dollars could lead to reductions in waste and reveal opportunities to promote efficiencies. Looking at overtime beyond the monetary cost, analysis of overtime use also gives supervisors an opportunity to monitor the stress placed on

personnel under their supervision from excessive overtime hours.

Currently, the Department is implementing Workday Enterprise Management system. As the Department continues this implementation and migration toward Workday's e-payroll solutions opportunities for analysis of overtime data input into the system may be revealed. Currently, the target date for implementation of the Workday e-time payroll system is July 2022.

Please contact Captain Cord Wood at 503-378-3720 with any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cord Wood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cord" and last name "Wood" clearly distinguishable.

Cord Wood
Captain, Patrol Services Division
Oregon State Police



Secretary of State
Shemia Fagan



Audits Director
Kip Memmott

This report is intended to promote the best possible management of public resources.

Copies may be obtained from:

Oregon Audits Division
255 Capitol St NE, Suite 500
Salem OR 97310

(503) 986-2255

audits.sos@oregon.gov

sos.oregon.gov/audits