



**Department of Legislative Services  
Office of Legislative Audits**

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**Performance Audit Update**

**Department of State Police  
Aviation Command  
Helicopter Operations**

Report Dated August 14, 2008

Presentation to the Joint Audit Committee

Bruce A. Myers, CPA

September 8, 2009

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### Background

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- The Command operated 12 helicopters from 8 bases (or sections), with primary missions being emergency medical transport, airborne law enforcement, and search and rescue.
  - The Command has approximately 160 authorized positions including pilots, flight paramedics, technicians, management and support personnel. Staffing is provided by both troopers and civilian personnel.
  - Fiscal year 2007 expenditures totaled \$22.3 million.
  - The Command flew an average of 8,000 missions per year during the five year period from fiscal year 2003 to 2007. Medevac missions comprised over 60% of the total.
  - Newest helicopter was purchased in 1999, with the remainder purchased prior to 1995.
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### Original Audit Objectives

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1. To determine the use and availability of the Command's helicopter fleet
2. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Command's helicopter maintenance and inspection operations
3. To evaluate the adequacy of the Command's staffing structure, personnel practices, and training policies
4. To determine the reliability of the Command's fiscal year 2005 and 2006 "Golden Hour" Managing for Results performance measure for timeliness of patient transport to trauma centers



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### Key Audit Issues (from original audit report)

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Presentation of original audit report to the JAC was made on September 9, 2008.

1. Use of helicopters for non-critical missions was not deemed to be significant.
  2. Better information systems are needed to provide data needed to manage critical aspects of its operations, including the identification of:
    - downtime by helicopter, and
    - all costs associated with maintenance to help assess efficiency, appropriate staffing levels and the cost/benefits of outsourcing.
  3. Certain personnel policies and practices should be addressed to foster more stable leadership, reduce staff turnover and establish competitive salaries.
  4. A key performance measure needs to be better defined and subject to quality assurance processes to ensure the reliability of results.
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### Report Recommendations & DSP Responses

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- Our report included 22 specific recommendations.
  - DSP's response indicated general agreement with all but one of the recommendations and included a timeline of the planned corrective (including anticipated completion dates). Completion dates were primarily either February 2009 or July 2009.
  - Area of Disagreement- Recommendation 21 "that the Command develop formal qualifications for its various management/ supervisory positions."
    - Subsequent to the issuance of the audit report and the September 2008 JAC hearing, OLA and DSP have been unable to reach agreement regarding establishing qualifications for certain management positions.
    - DSP believes this recommendation would unduly limit the Superintendent's legal authority (provided for in State law) to organize, and assign personnel within, the Department.
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