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DPS Requests Funding for Driving Track

After an alarming increase in the number of serious traffic crashes involving our personnel, DPS has asked the Texas Legislature to fund an emergency vehicle operations course adjacent to the firearms training facility near Florence in Williamson County.

The proposed driver training facility would consist of multiple driving areas as well as classrooms and driving simulators. We intend to make the driver training facility available on a scheduled basis to all Texas law enforcement agencies; the course design allows for multiple exercises to be conducted simultaneously.

Why the track is needed

In the five-year period from January 2001 to December 2005, DPS experienced a 30 percent increase in the number of fleet crashes involving its commissioned officers.

Two commissioned officers and six citizens were killed in those fleet crashes, while 239 officers and 302 citizens were injured. The crashes cost the state \$8.8 million in civil litigation, vehicle repair and replacement, plus 40,824 lost patrol hours.

Several factors have contributed to this marked increase in DPS officer crashes. Sixty-one percent of the agency's fleet collisions involved less-tenured commissioned officers.

Additional factors include the rapidly increasing number of vehicles on Texas highways and the advanced technological equipment used in today's patrol units. These two factors in conjunction mean officers on patrol are now working in an ever-changing, multi-tasked environment that requires exceptional vehicle operation and judgment skills.

How DPS trains now

We fall short in providing the necessary practical driver training to our officers. The recruit driver-training schedule consists of 22 hours of classroom training focusing on defensive driving concepts, 32 hours of driver skills training and 17 hours of city and rural highway driving.

While DPS officers receive the full 22 hours of defensive driving classroom training, the size of the recruit schools and the lack of an adequate driver training facility reduce the actual hands-on, behind the wheel training to less than two hours of driver skills training and approximately 18 hours of

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Dear fellow employee,

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to the trooper-trainees who began their careers with DPS as recruits on January 21.

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As you read in the last issue, and can see in the article to the left of my column, DPS is involved in many exciting projects that will require additional funding from the Texas Legislature.

We hope that the Legislature will approve funding for the emergency vehicle operations course. Once completed, it will help make our drivers safer.

In the meantime, there are three steps you can take to make yourself a better driver: slow down, wear your seat belt and pay attention to what's happening around you.

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We continue to have fellow employees who are deployed to the military. Many of them are serving overseas. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers, and please assist their families if they need help.

Thomas A. Davis Jr.

Short Shots

SWAT tryouts

The DPS SWAT Team is seeking applicants. Any commissioned officer who resides or is stationed within four (4) contiguous counties of Travis or Williamson counties may apply. Interested candidates should submit a memo, via Department e-mail, to Lt. **Mike Tacquard** or Lt. **David Franklin** by February 28 stating your desire to try out.

Dive team looking for you

The DPS Dive Recovery Team is seeking applicants for tryouts. Any commissioned THP trooper wishing to apply for consideration should submit a memo through their chain of command, forwarding the original directly to Lt. **Ronnie Tacquard** in the THP Chief's office. Dive certification is not required and there is no residency requirement. For further information, call 512-424-2339.

Mile Markers

Promotions

HP

Glen Wayne Garrett, Sgt., HP Victoria to Lt., HP Austin-Capitol; **Arturo De La Garza**, Sgt., HP Mission to Lt., HP McAllen.

CLE

Jorge Lopez, Tr. III, DL McAllen to Sgt., Narcotics Svc. McAllen; **Adam Brandon Bell**, Tr. II, HP Longview to Sgt., Narcotics Svc. Laredo; **Kevin Judson Hunt**, Staff Sgt., GPD Austin to Sgt., Narcotics Svc. Laredo/detached GPD; **Sherwin Levon Sanders**, Tr. II, HP Texas City to Sgt., Narcotics Svc. Laredo; **Hector Moreno Cruz**, Tr. III, CVE Harlingen to Sgt., Narcot-

ics Svc. Laredo; **Gregory Scott Lanford**, Tr. II, HP George West to Sgt., Narcotics Svc. Laredo.

Retirements

Foy Gene Goldston, Capt., CIS Midland, 32 yrs., 6 mos., 19 days; **Dennis Marvin Jones**, Sen. Tr., CVE Longview, 29 yrs., 24 days; **Becky Fern Kelley**, Admin. Asst. III, MVE Hurst, 24 yrs., 8 mos., 12 days; **Kathleen Woodard**, Spec. III, EMD Austin, 5 yrs., 1 day;

Marcial Italo Gonzalez, Sen. Tr., DL Humble, 25 yrs., 6 mos., 21 days; **Clyde G. Murdock**, Admin. Asst. I, DL Austin, 18 yrs., 11 mos.

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city and rural driving per student.

The limited DPS driver-skills training is currently conducted in the parking lot around the football field at the Tony Burger Center in Austin. Using this facility severely limits the type and duration of skills training for recruits.

Missing from the current program is practical training in high-speed operation, pursuit transition

Deaths

Johnie Alvis Andrews, Patrolman II, ret. HP Gilmer (Dec. 1948 – Aug. 1978) died December 13, 2006; **Richard Lamoine Cunningham**, ret. Tr. IV, HP Paris (July 1967 – Sept. 1993) died December 23, 2006; **Angela Woodyard Johnson**, Admin. Asst. III, DL Angleton (June 1992 – Jan. 2007) died January 1, 2007; **George Edward Browne**, ret. Scientific Director, Crime Lab Austin HQ (March 1958 – Nov. 1990) died January 2, 2007; **Floyd F. Keefer**, ret. Operator, Communications Texarkana (Aug. 1976 to Sep. 1993) died January 6, 2007.

from rural to urban environments, judgment skills in high-stress pursuits, transition from pursuit to felony stop procedure and routine patrol operations in a multi-tasking environment. Moreover, DPS is unable to adequately provide recurrent or remedial driver training when needed.

What DPS proposes

The new facility in Florence will consist of multiple driving areas that allow for training in various driving techniques ranging from high-speed maneuvers to off-road recovery. In addition to classroom instruction, the course would incorporate the following training exercises:

Highway Response Course.

This driving course is a continuous long track that simulates rural driving conditions and allows for high-speed pursuit training. The course will consist of two-lane, four-lane and divided highway sections with improved and unimproved shoulders, probably with a variety of straight-aways, curves, hills, rural-type intersections and merge lanes commonly found on con-

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On the mend...

Best wishes for a speedy recovery from line-of-duty injuries go to:

Tr. **Steve Stone**, HP Tyler, shot by suspects;

Tr. **Ralphell Watkins**, HP Plano, injured in a vehicle crash;

Sgt. **Shannon Henderson**, Narcotics Alpine, injured in a vehicle crash;

Tr. **Brian Kemp**, HP Beaumont, injured arresting suspect;

Tr. **Juan Sandoval**, CVE Laredo, injured during a traffic stop;

Good news! Tr. **John Kopacz**, HP Bay City, has returned to work on light duty and Sgt. **Gilbert Arredondo**, Narcotics Lubbock, has returned to work on full duty.

Conceptual drawing of proposed emergency vehicle operations course (Final design to be determined by architectural study)

trolled access highways.

Precision Skills Pad.

The precision skills pad is a flat, paved surface used for vehicle awareness and space management training. Some of the objectives are to teach driver awareness of the vehicle dimensions, turning radius limitations, proper seating position, foot position and braking, hand placement on the steering wheel, and use of mirrors.

Skid Control Pad.

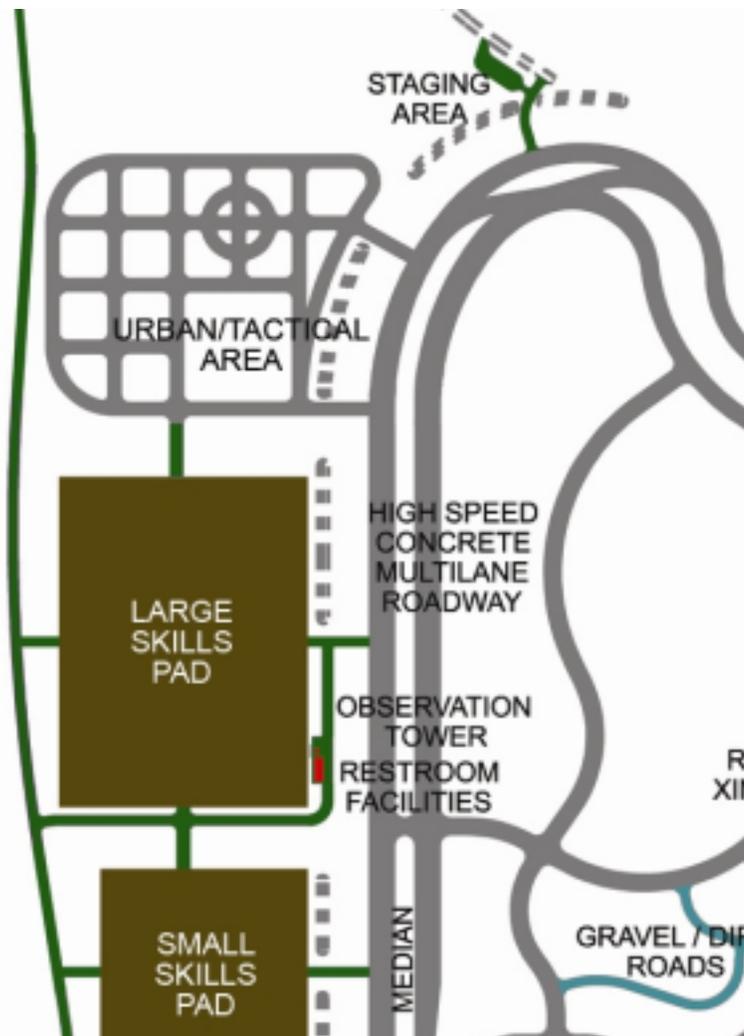
This area has a special surface for creating greatly reduced traction when wet. Exercises are aimed at teaching skid prevention, low traction vehicle control and recovery. The ability to wet down the area through a sprinkler system is necessary to keep tire damage and wear to a minimum.

Off-Road Response Course.

Non-emergency, emergency and pursuit driving situations could be taught on various roadway surfaces such as dirt, sand and gravel that produce sight restrictions and vehicle handling problems for the driver.

Urban and Tactical Driving Area.

This is a driving environment with urban type roads, intersections and sight restrictions. Driver training would include various traffic situations commonly found in an urban area that



would benefit routine patrol, emergency and pursuit training.

Large class graduates from Northwestern School

In November, 42 mid-level commissioned DPS managers completed the Northwestern University's Center for Public Safety School of Police Staff and Command at the DPS Training Academy.

Captains and lieutenants from several services within the Department suspended their regular duties during the 10-week school.

Some of the topics studied include organizational behavior, budget preparation, project management, problem solving, ethics and the police manager, leadership, managing discipline and police traffic management.

Lt. **Larry L. Allen**, Texas Highway Patrol Houston

Capt. **Philip K. Allen**, Narcotics Garland

Lt. **Enrique Betancourt**, Texas Highway Patrol McAllen

Lt. **Curtis D. Bitz**, Narcotics Palestine

Capt. **James L. Blodgett**, Criminal Intelligence Austin

Lt. **Joe N. Bridges**, Driver License Division Garland

Lt. **Jerry D. Byrne**, Texas Ranger Division Garland

Lt. **Donald W. Cameron**, Texas Highway Patrol Amarillo

Lt. **Awilda Cartagena**, Criminal Intelligence Garland

Lt. **Katie A. Conley**, Driver License Division Plano

Capt. **Adrian Cortez**, Motor Vehicle Theft Houston

Lt. **Russell L. Couch**, Narcotics Texarkana

Lt. **August W. Crais**, Criminal Intelligence Austin

Lt. **Adan Cruz**, Narcotics Brownsville

Lt. **Martin Cuellar, Jr.**, Narcotics Laredo

Lt. **Richard L. Dickson**, Narcotics Midland

Capt. **William M. Diggs, Jr.**, Texas Highway Patrol Austin

Lt. **Donald G. Fleming**, Narcotics Sherman

Lt. **Darryl G. Gelasco**, Narcotics El Paso

Lt. **Walt A. Goodson**, Criminal Intelligence Austin

Lt. **Douglas W. Hatch**, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement El Paso

Capt. **Howard D. Henderson**, Office of Audit and Inspection Austin

Inspector II **Leonard R. Hinojosa**, Office of Audit and Inspection Austin

Lt. **George D. Holleway, III**, Criminal Intelligence Austin

Lt. **John H. Landrum**, Criminal Intelligence Corpus Christi

Lt. **Rhonda L. Lawson**, Texas Highway Patrol Corpus Christi

Lt. **Timothy A. Lite**, Texas Highway Patrol San Antonio

Lt. **Steven D. McAdams**, Motor Vehicle Theft Conroe

Lt. **Kennis Miles, Jr.**, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Garland

Lt. **Reese Morgan**, Motor Vehicle Theft Garland

Lt. **John H. Murphy**, Narcotics Abilene

Capt. **Jose P. Ortiz III**, Narcotics Corpus Christi

Lt. **Frank R. Paige**, Narcotics Austin

Capt. **David L. Palmer**, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Austin

Lt. **Ronald E. Pettigrew**, Narcotics Waco

Lt. **Patrick W. Poerner**, Criminal Intelligence San Antonio

Lt. **Monty L. Posey**, Narcotics Garland

Lt. **Derek J. Rodriguez**, Driver License Division Waco

Lt. **Louis A. Sanchez**, Texas Highway Patrol Austin

Lt. **Andrew J. Sitgreaves**, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Del Rio

Lt. **Kellye M. Turner**, Driver License Division Clear Lake

Lt. **John C. Vigil**, Motor Vehicle Theft Austin

