

# Public Safety Overview

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## The Agency

The Department of Public Safety (DHS) is charged with various responsibilities of which the intended impact is to save lives and reduce injuries. The agency is organized into the following six divisions in order to accomplish this mission:

- the State Highway Patrol
- the Bureau of Motor Vehicles
- the Investigative Unit
- the Emergency Management Agency
- Emergency Medical Services
- Administration

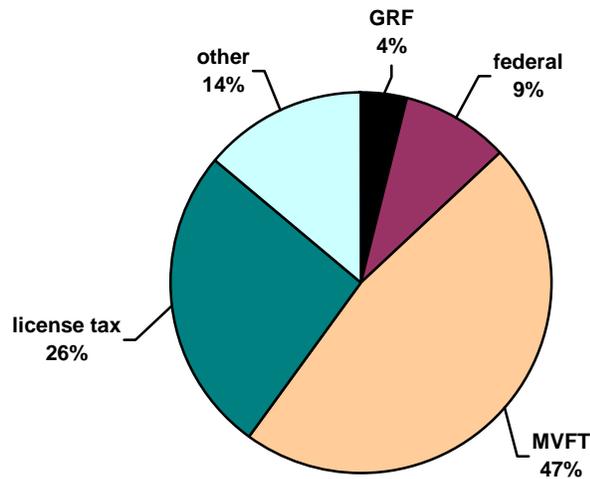
The largest of these divisions is the Highway Patrol (OSHP), which employed approximately 2,585 personnel as of December 31, 2000, with seventy eight trainees at the Academy scheduled to graduate in March 2001. Of these personnel, approximately 272 worked at the headquarters in Columbus. OSHP is organized into ten districts located throughout the state. The second largest division is the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), which employed about 885 full-time, and 17 part-time, personnel. The substantial majority of BMV personnel are located in Columbus. The other divisions are markedly smaller, so that the total personnel employed full-time by the agency numbered about 3,794. A copy of the organizational chart submitted in the agency's budget request is reproduced below. Among the smaller divisions: 1) the Investigative Unit investigates liquor violations and food stamp trafficking, 2) the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) coordinates the support for local disaster-relief efforts, and provides support for mitigation programs that would alleviate future disasters, 3) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) tests and certifies Ohio's Emergency Medical Technicians and firefighters, and 4) the Administration Division provides administrative support for the other divisions, and administers highway safety and information programs.

## The Budget

The Executive Proposal calls for a budget of \$413.3 million in fiscal year (FY) 2002, after excluding budget line items to be considered in the main operating budget, and \$433.2 million in FY 2003. The FY 2002 figure represents a 2.7% increase over FY 2001, and the FY 2003 figure represents a 4.8% increase compared with FY 2002.

The agency's budget derives from several revenue sources. Approximately 4% of the agency's proposed spending authority for FY 2002 would come from the General Revenue Fund, and will be considered along with the state's main operating budget. Approximately 9% of the agency's proposed spending authority would be funded by federal dollars, 47% from the motor vehicle fuel tax, and 26% from vehicle license and registration fees and other vehicle-related fees. Other funding sources, consisting mostly of intragovernmental transfers, add up to about 14% of the agency's proposed budget.

Public Safety Revenue Sources



### Multi-Agency Radio Communications System

DHS will be one of the heaviest users of the Multi-Agency Radio Communications System, or MARCS. The contract for system construction was awarded in late 1998, and the system will begin to be put into operation during the 2001-2003 biennium. By the end of the biennium, it is anticipated that approximately 80% of the MARCS system will be in operation. The OSHP will be responsible for the system's maintenance and will need to hire additional dispatchers who are well-trained in the capabilities provided by MARCS, such as computer-aided dispatching. The EMA plans to operate a mobile MARCS unit. The system will be operated by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), so the 23 personnel that EMA had been authorized to hire to operate the system will be employed at DAS instead. Three of the six divisions, OSHP, the Investigative Unit, and EMA, have MARCS-related supplemental budget requests.

The fact that several agencies will use the MARCS system provides fiscal advantages and disadvantages. On the advantage side, the more agencies use the system, the lower the cost per agency. And the less duplication of radio communications systems across state agencies, the lower the cost to state government. Thus the fact that the Department of Natural Resources has rejoined the MARCS system means that MARCS-related costs should fall for the divisions of the Department of Public Safety (DHS) that use the system. On the disadvantage side, the cross-agency nature of MARCS means that the costs of the system must somehow be allocated to the agencies concerned. MARCS-related costs will be paid by DAS, with DAS being reimbursed by other agencies through user charges.

### Impact of Legislation Passed in the 123<sup>rd</sup> G.A.

Several bills were passed in the previous General Assembly that will have budgetary impacts on DHS, including H.B. 138, H.B. 163, H.B. 600, and S.B. 239. The previous transportation budget bill, H.B. 163, merged the liquor control and food stamp trafficking programs into one division, now known as the Investigative Unit. That division's experience with the merger is described in the Analysis of Executive Proposal section of the Redbook. H.B. 138, often referred to as the "Trauma Bill," created several new

duties for Emergency Medical Services. EMS submitted a supplemental budget request to fund five new positions to comply with the bill's provisions; more details are presented in the Analysis of Executive Proposal section. H.B. 600 placed restrictions on the ability of the Registrar or any Deputy Registrar to sell personal information gleaned from BMV records. DHS reports that the revenue loss for the first six months of fiscal year 2001 (through December 31, 2000) was approximately \$800,000 as compared with the equivalent period during FY 2000.

### **New Technology at the BMV**

The BMV requested funding, which the executive proposal approved, to update the imaging system that it employs to store approximately 14.5 million documents, a number that is growing by about 3.2 million each year. Fifty percent of the cost of replacing the current system would come from the self-supporting Financial Responsibility Fund; there is a supplemental request to fund the other fifty percent of the cost (from the State Highway Fund Group).

Also, in an effort to make it more convenient for Ohio drivers to register their vehicles, BMV has begun to enable them to renew using the phone or the Internet (at [www.oplates.com](http://www.oplates.com)). These capabilities were introduced in October of 2000. By the end of January 2001, approximately 40,000 Ohioans had registered via the Internet, and 9,000 by phone.

### **Executive Proposal**

The governor is proposing that the total funding for the department's operations be set at \$413.3 million in FY 2002 and \$433.1 million in FY 2003. The FY 2002 figure would represent a 2.7% increase compared with the estimated FY 2001 expenditures of \$403.0 million. While these numbers indicate an increase in funding for the department overall, a number of individual line items are proposed to be reduced. Operating expenses are increased for the Highway Patrol, the BMV, the EMS, and the Investigative Unit, but are reduced for Administration and its Information and Education program (operating expenses for EMA are contained in the main operating budget). The \$4 million fall in line item 762-627 is simply a return to normal after historically high funding levels in the 1999-2001 biennium to replace an extensive network of equipment. There are similarly large decreases in two of the disaster relief line items, specifically items 763-609 and 763-645, which are reduced by a total of approximately \$7 million. While disaster relief funding is critical for the state, funding needs in this area are by nature idiosyncratic, so that this would not be considered a reduction in operating funds. More details by division and by line item can be found in the Analysis of Executive Proposal section.