



QUESTIONS FOR DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION (DESPP) COMMISSIONER NOMINEE

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DESPP

DESPP consists of the divisions of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, State Police, Statewide Emergency Telecommunications, and Scientific Services; Police Officer Standards and Training Council; and Fire Prevention and Control Commission.

The DESPP commissioner is the head of the State Police and has all the powers and privileges of a police officer. The commissioner appoints resident state troopers; enforces commercial vehicle laws at weigh stations; and licenses professional bondsmen, private detectives, and crane operators, among others.

QUESTIONS FOR NOMINEE

1. Tell us about your five top initiatives as commissioner of the New York City prison system and the outcomes of these initiatives. What was the biggest challenge you faced as commissioner and how did you address it?
2. How do you think the role of state police commissioner is similar to, and different from, that of commissioner of corrections? What did you learn as a commissioner that will be most useful in your new assignment as DESPP head? What "best practices" did you observe or implement in any of the prison systems you headed that you believe will work well in the State Police?
3. Other than funding issues, what do you consider to be the greatest constraints on, and challenges for, law enforcement entities? How prepared is the agency to meet these challenges? Given the challenges, what do you consider to be realistic goals for your first year or two as commissioner?
4. Under what circumstances would you support giving an independent oversight body the authority to monitor and review State Police policies? What should be the limits of its power?

5. In what areas do you think the State Police and other law enforcement entities, including local police, can collaborate to cut costs and increase efficiency without compromising on security?
6. DESPP is an agency in transition, having recently been created by merging two large state agencies. Can you please explain your experience managing an agency in transition and any special challenges this may pose? What is the key to a successful outcome?
7. Several recent State Police initiatives have focused on "civilianizing" certain responsibilities, including dispatch functions. These initiatives have been met with mixed legislative approval. Can you explain whether you have ever been involved in similar efforts and, if so, the outcome?
8. How would you describe your experience working with the union in the New York City prison system? How do you think the union would describe your performance?
9. Last year, the legislature passed two major gun bills, which significantly expanded DESPP regulatory responsibilities. One major provision was the establishment of a DESPP deadly weapon offender registry. How is the agency coping with the demands placed on it by the gun legislation? What can you tell us about the registry?
10. The State Police has been criticized for the tardiness and quality of the report on the Sandy Hook massacre. How concerned are you about these criticisms? Have you considered the merits of the criticisms?
11. What is the most important lesson the department has learned about emergency preparedness in the wake of Hurricane Sandy and the past few winter storms? Is the state prepared to respond to a category 1 or stronger hurricane? What further steps does the department need to take to prepare for the next emergency?
12. What are the challenges of managing and coordinating the many different and distinct entities comprising DESPP? Please identify any functions assigned to DESPP that you do not think are a perfect fit for the agency.

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