

Questions for the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Commissioner Nominee

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Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection ([CGS § 29-1r](#))

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) [consists of](#) the (1) Police Officer Standards and Training Council; (2) Fire Prevention and Control Commission; and (3) divisions of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications, Emergency Management and Homeland Security, State Police, and Scientific Services. The DESPP commissioner is the administrative and commanding head of the State Police and the administrative head of its divisions of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and Scientific Services ([CGS §§ 7-294b](#); [7-323k](#); [28-24](#), as amended by [PA 22-47](#); [29-1b](#); & [29-7b](#)).

Among other things, the commissioner must (1) provide a coordinated program for protecting life and property and responding to statewide emergency management and homeland security issues; (2) serve on the Coordinating Advisory Board and State-Wide Firearms Trafficking Task Force Policy Board, among other boards, councils, and commissions; and (3) investigate the cause, circumstances, and origins of fires involving property damage, personal injury, or death ([CGS §§ 29-1r](#); [29-1t](#), as amended by [PA 22-47](#); [29-38f](#); & [29-310](#), as amended by [21-165](#)).

General

1. What have you learned from your four years of experience as the DESPP commissioner?

2. How have you managed and coordinated the many different and distinct entities comprising DESPP? Are all the functions assigned to DESPP good fits or should changes be made?
3. What do you consider to be the greatest constraints on, and challenges for, DESPP? How prepared is the department to meet these challenges?
4. What will be your top goals or initiatives moving forward?

Police

1. What is the current number of troopers on staff? Do you believe the number is adequate? Do you think there should be a statutory minimum as there has been in the past (e.g., 1,248 sworn troopers)?
2. The legislature recently approved a [new contract](#) with the State Police Union ([HR 9](#) and [SR 7](#) (2023)). Do you believe this will help DESPP retain and recruit troopers? Is there more the department or legislature can do to help with those efforts?
3. [Last year](#), you terminated eight recruits from a training group for violating rules and regulations. How often has this happened before? What steps has the department taken to avoid similar incidents in the future?
4. The Department of Administrative Services issued a [pre-design study](#) last year on reconstructing the State Police firing range. What is the status of the facility? Should a new facility at a different location be considered?
5. Describe [the department's efforts](#) on mental health and wellness for troopers and other employees. Have you received feedback from troopers on this issue? How can you measure the efficacy of these programs?
6. Are there areas where the State Police and other law enforcement entities, including local police, could collaborate to cut costs and increase efficiency without compromising security? How would this type of collaboration affect the resident state trooper program?

Fire Prevention

1. What are the biggest challenges facing the Fire Prevention and Control Commission and how are you addressing them?
2. How many fire schools do you think the state should have? Do you think the state should change how it funds these schools?
3. Do you have any ideas on what can be done to retain and recruit more career and volunteer firefighters in the state? Should the state make efforts to increase the number of women who work as firefighters? If so, how?

Emergency Management and Homeland Security

1. Do you think police dispatch centers should be consolidated? If so, should it be done through a mandate or through incentives? How many centers do you think Connecticut needs?
2. How well equipped is Connecticut to deal with cybercrimes? What special problems, if any, has the increase in Internet use presented for law enforcement?
3. To what extent is terrorism a threat in Connecticut? How prepared is the state to deal with such a threat?
4. How prepared is the state for a natural disaster? What further steps could DESPP take to prepare for the next emergency?

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