



# PROGRAM EVALUATION DIVISION

## NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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## Centralized Fleet Operations Will Improve Management and Oversight of Department of Public Safety Vehicles

### Summary

A 2011–12 series of Program Evaluation Division reports on management and oversight of state-owned vehicles prompted legislative interest in law enforcement vehicles. The present evaluation is the second of a series on law enforcement motor vehicles that examines vehicles owned and operated by the Division of Law Enforcement in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (DPS).

**Two years after the direction to consolidate, DPS management and oversight of law enforcement vehicles remains fragmented and decentralized.** DPS was created in an effort to improve efficiency in state government. Although consolidation plans included vehicle management, DPS's law enforcement fleet is managed by three different sections: Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE), State Capitol Police (SCP), and State Highway Patrol (SHP). Oversight of vehicles is the responsibility of supervisory personnel at the district level, but vehicles are managed on a daily basis by over 2,000 individuals with assigned law enforcement vehicles.

**The decentralized management and oversight of DPS's law enforcement vehicles are inconsistent and do not meet fleet management best practices.** Policies and procedures for law enforcement vehicles lack specificity and are inconsistent, costing the State \$153,872 annually in additional fuel and accelerated maintenance schedules. Information on fleet composition, vehicle utilization, and cost is disparate and incomplete. As a result, the three sections cannot determine the right number and mix of vehicles or if vehicles are being used efficiently. Finally, ALE, SCP, and SHP do not conduct adequate replacement planning for new vehicle acquisition, and therefore, cannot accurately project the budget requirements for replacing vehicles.

**DPS lacks a formal plan to guide the consolidation of its vehicle management and oversight.** DPS's vision for a centralized fleet management program is similar to existing programs that meet best practices, but DPS has no formal plan to guide its efforts.

**Based on these findings the General Assembly should direct DPS to develop a strategic plan and proposal for the implementation of a centralized fleet management program.** This plan should address components of fleet management best practices. DPS should also develop a proposal to identify the initial and on-going capital investment needed for implementing the centralized fleet management program, including costs for the fleet information management system, central maintenance depot, and necessary personnel.