



NEWS RELEASE

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FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL TAPS SMITH TO LEAD INVESTIGATION TEAM

~ New chief takes command of FHP's Bureau of Investigations ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Florida Highway Patrol Director, Col. John Czernis, announced today that Maj. Leroy Smith will take the reigns as the chief of investigations on Jan. 15, 2010. As he assumes his new position within the Patrol, Smith will trade in his oak leaf cluster (worn by majors) for the chief's insignia. Smith will oversee the Bureau of Investigations. He will fill a position vacated by retirement.

The BOI is responsible for conducting investigations into auto theft, commercial vehicle and cargo theft, heavy equipment theft, identity theft, driver license fraud, title fraud, odometer fraud, and other criminal activity related to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' mission – providing highway safety and security through excellence in service, education and enforcement. The bureau works closely with local, state and federal partners in a concerted effort to combat criminal activity.

“Chief Smith has been a member of the patrol for more than 20 years, the past two of which he has been charged with training our newest members at the academy. He has a proven track record for success, which demonstrates that he is ready for the next step in his career,” said Czernis. “The position of chief of investigations will require a greater level of responsibility and accountability. I have full confidence in his abilities to lead the section of the Patrol that is responsible for major criminal investigations.”

Maj. Leroy Smith has been the chief training officer at the Patrol's academy since February 2008. He began his career with the Patrol 20 years ago in Sarasota after graduating with the 82nd Recruit Class. Since then, he has moved up through the ranks in Miami, Gainesville and Tallahassee. He holds a Master of Public Administration Degree from Florida State University. Smith is a graduate of the 22nd Session of the University of Louisville's Command Officers Development Course at the Southern Police Institute.

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles provides highway safety and security through excellence in service, education and enforcement. The Department is leading the way to a safer Florida through the efficient and professional execution of its core mission: the issuance of driver licenses, vehicle tags and titles and operation of the Florida Highway Patrol. To learn more about DHSMV and the services offered, visit www.flhsmv.gov.

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