



Concealment of State Police pay records was 'clearly deliberate,' Baker says



JOSE LUIS MAGANA/ASSOCIATED PRESS/FILE

Governor Charlie Baker said that he expects officials to explain why payroll records for State Police Troop F were not being reported.

By Matt Stout and [Matt Rocheleau](#)

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Governor Charlie Baker said Monday that the act of not disclosing years of payroll records for an entire division of the State Police was “clearly deliberate,” and a top state finance official demanded to know if other state agencies were failing to reveal other key documents.

The charge by the state’s chief executive [follows a Globe report](#) showing that neither the State Police nor

the Massachusetts Port Authority had publicly filed information on payouts for Troop F with the state comptroller since 2010.

“I think it was clearly deliberate for some reason. I don’t know what the reason was. It was 2010,” said Baker, who took office in 2015.

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“I certainly would be the first to agree that it’s important for the State Police to get its act together,” said Baker, who spoke to reporters following an unrelated event in Dorchester.

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The 140-person Troop F division is funded by Massport, an independent public agency that owns and operates Logan International Airport, Seaport properties, and two other airports outside Boston. But the troopers are State Police employees, and the troop’s operations are overseen by State Police commanders.

Officials from State Police,

Massport, and the comptroller’s office plan to meet Tuesday.

Comptroller Thomas Shack said he intends to ask why both agencies kept his office, which manages and publishes state finance data, in the dark.

“I don’t know if it’s nefarious,”

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Shack said in an interview. “But obviously there’s some error here.” Shack said his agency is reaching out to all state offices to ensure that no one else has withheld payroll records.

Records for Troop F, hidden from public view for years, portray a lucrative, overtime-laden operation that outpaces the compensation totals of troopers working in other State Police divisions.

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Calling the Globe report a “shock to all of us,” Baker said he backs the moves his new head of the agency, Colonel Kerry A. Gilpin, is taking. The department has been continually buffeted by new allegations, a series of internal investigations, and disclosures about lucrative salaries and overtime payouts that have frustrated top lawmakers.

On Friday, nine troopers were suspended without pay and nine more retired in the face of an investigation into overtime abuses. Then, on Monday, the Globe disclosed that payroll records for Troop F — including some of the department’s highest earners — weren’t filed with the state comptroller for several years.

Baker noted that Gilpin has taken steps that “are directly designed to address some of those issues.” “But it’s clear that the State Police is going to have to work back some of that public credibility that’s

been sacrificed by some of these really bad actors,” he said.

In explaining the handling of Troop F payroll records, Massport spokeswoman Jennifer Mehigan told the Globe that officials did not file records with the comptroller’s office because they considered work done by the troop’s employees to be akin to services provided by a vendor. She said Massport is working to provide records dating back to 2010 to the comptroller.

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State Police spokesman David Procopio put the responsibility for the Troop F payroll on Massport. He said Monday that the law enforcement agency was “satisfied with Massport’s response” and no other State Police employee pay data have been improperly withheld.

Procopio said State Police see no issue with the arrangement the department has with Massport. “Our oversight is from a police perspective,” Procopio said. “We make decisions on staffing and deployment based on security needs.”

The disclosure of the Troop F payroll is the latest turmoil to hit the State Police, which has 2,150 troopers and handles a range of duties, from patrolling the Mass Pike and Logan to investigating homicides.

The department’s handling of the arrest of a judge’s daughter — and revelations that the former colonel ordered the scrubbing of the report — has sparked at least three separate probes — by Attorney General Maura Healey, the State Ethics Commission, and Colonel Gilpin, who hired a former district attorney for an internal review.

On Monday, Healey spokeswoman Jillian Fennimore said the office was gathering information about the Troop F matter, calling the payroll disclosure practices “concerning.”

Healey’s office is also investigating the alleged abuse of overtime by more than 20 troopers in 2016, and Gilpin has expanded her internal review into the matter to cover past years, officials have said.

Speaker Robert A. DeLeo’s office on Monday said that he is “deeply disturbed” by the latest payroll revelations and that he is speaking with colleagues about “legislative options to address the troubling behavior.”

Senate President Harriette L. Chandler questioned whether the agency's scandals point to an endemic issue or is "concentrated amongst a group of bad actors."

"As a legislative body, we will take appropriate action, whether that is holding oversight hearings, or looking at needed policy changes," the Worcester Democrat said in a statement.

For several years, the State Police publicly released payroll statistics without Troop F data. The agency repeatedly claimed that the pay for all of its employees was listed on the comptroller's website.

In addition, the State Police have repeatedly refused to release troop assignments.

Secretary of State William Galvin's office, which handles public-records appeals, ordered the State Police to provide the troop assignments for its workers in January, but the State Police refused to comply and have asked Galvin to reconsider.

Baker said that should change as well.

"I certainly think that all the information associated with what people make and what troop they work out of should absolutely be on the same website that everyone else's data is on," he said.

The records for Troop F accounted for more than \$32.5 million in spending last year. At least 79 percent of Troop F made more last year than Baker, who earned \$151,800.

Tom Nolan, a former Boston police officer who now teaches criminology at Merrimack College, said Troop F has long been known as "a cash cow."

"The sole reason State Police troopers seek an assignment over there is because it's so lucrative," said Nolan. "That's been an open secret for decades."

He said not only do Troop F employees tend to make more money, they also typically do work that's less taxing.

"At some point it's fair for the taxpayers to question whether police officers are worth this kind of money," he added.

Timothy Alben, who led the State Police force from 2012 through 2015, called the arrangement between State Police and Massport mutually beneficial.

"We give them what they need. We don't give them more than what they ask for," Alben said. He noted that he was unaware that Troop F payroll data had been kept from public view.

Alben said he was disappointed in the scandals swirling around his former department.

"With the allegations that have come up, I think everyone is concerned," he said. "There's a great deal of anger and outrage that anyone would take advantage of their responsibilities and duties."

The most recent batch of controversies date back to late last year.

Superintendent Richard McKeon and his top deputy, Francis Hughes, retired abruptly in November amid revelations that McKeon ordered subordinates to alter an arrest report containing seamy details about the daughter of Judge Timothy Bibaud.

Two other top officials — Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Risteen and Major Susan Anderson — linked to the altered report retired suddenly in February.

Meanwhile, the agency launched an investigation into the hiring of Risteen's former girlfriend, trooper Leigha Genduso, an admitted marijuana dealer and coconspirator in a massive 2007 federal drug case.

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