



News Release - 17
For Immediate Release: April 15, 2025

Virginia State Police Strengthens Agency Operations and Services with Executive Staff Restructure & Promotions

RICHMOND – Newly-appointed Virginia State Police (VSP) Superintendent Colonel Matthew D. Hanley today announced significant executive leadership changes, effective April 25th, in support of his goal to move the department forward by strengthening VSP operations and enhancing the many services and programs the state police provide residents and visitors across the Commonwealth.

“These promotions and appointments reflect the extensive experience, comprehensive knowledge, and progressive thinking that is needed to mitigate the complex public safety challenges in the Commonwealth and achieve our strategic planning initiatives,” Colonel Hanley said. “I am profoundly grateful for the dedication and commitment of our staff and am confident that the changes we are making will help the agency achieve the next level of excellence we all expect.”



Lieutenant Colonel Keenon C. Hook is promoted to Deputy Superintendent, where he will support the Superintendent in leading the Department and will coordinate day-to-day operations. Prior to his promotion, Hook served as the Director of the Bureau of Strategic Governance, where he led strategic planning, policy and governance, legal affairs, and intergovernmental relations to promote alignment, engagement, and innovation.

Hook began his public safety career as a prosecuting attorney, where he was inspired by the professionalism and service of the troopers whose cases he prosecuted. He later joined the Department as a patrol trooper before being promoted to special agent in the Bureau of Criminal Investigation’s Chesapeake Field Office. There, he investigated violent crimes and later supervised both the bomb-arson and violent crime special agents in southeastern Virginia. His leadership roles have included command of the Criminal Justice Information Services Division and executive oversight of key agency functions including information technology, finance, human resources, and training.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from The Citadel and a *Juris Doctor* from the College of William & Mary’s Marshall-Wythe School of Law. He is also a graduate of the University of Virginia’s National Criminal Justice Command College. Throughout his career, Lieutenant Colonel Hook has remained committed to public safety, principled leadership, and continuous improvement in service to the Commonwealth.

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Lieutenant Colonel Kirk S. Marlowe has agreed to delay his retirement to take on the role of Chief Transformation Officer. In this new role he will leverage his many years of experience to directly support the Superintendent's vision of implementing high-impact strategic projects to drive organizational growth, innovation, and sustained improvements.

Marlowe has served as the Deputy Superintendent since his appointment to the position on August 19, 2022. He began his career with the Department in 1988, and spent seven years in the Richmond Division as a trooper and special agent before he was promoted to Training Academy sergeant in 1996. Over the years with the Virginia State Police, he has supervised the Violent Crimes Unit and the Staff Inspection Section as a first sergeant, served as a lieutenant in the Richmond BCI Field Office, and commanded the Counter-Terrorism and Criminal Interdiction (CCI) Unit. He achieved the rank of captain in 2009, where he oversaw the Support Services Division before being assigned to establish and supervise the new High Tech Crimes Division within the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. In 2015, he was promoted to Deputy Director of the Bureau of Administrative and Support Services (BASS) and was subsequently promoted to BASS Director in 2016.

A Chesterfield County native, Marlowe graduated, *summa cum laude*, from the University of Richmond with a Bachelor of Applied Studies degree in human resource management and leadership. He has a Master of Arts in security studies from the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security. He was a valedictorian of the Administrative Officer's Graduate Course at the Southern Police Institute at the University of Louisville.



Major Norman Gray is promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and appointed to serve as the Director of the Bureau of Strategic Governance (BSG). Prior to his promotion, Gray served as Deputy Director of BSG, and the Department's Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion Officer, since 2023.

Gray graduated from the State Police Academy in August 1989. In 2005, he was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to the Bureau of Field Operations' Richmond Division Area 1 Office (Henrico). In 2014, Gray was promoted to First Sergeant in the Bureau Criminal Investigation (BCI) Counterterrorism and Criminal Interdiction Unit, where he remained upon his promotion to unit commander in 2017. A year later, Gray assumed command of the BCI Support Services Division, and in 2020, he transferred to Division Commander of the Bureau Criminal Investigation Richmond Field Office.

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Gray holds a master's degree in public safety from the University of Virginia and a bachelor's degree in behavioral science and human services from Bluefield University. He graduated from the FBI National Academy in 2023 and from the Virginia Commonwealth University Commonwealth Leadership Academy in 2024. He is also a graduate of the University of Virginia's National Criminal Justice Command College. Gray currently serves as the President of the Central Virginia Law Enforcement Chief Executive Association (CVLECEA) and as a board member of the Virginia Public Safety Foundation (VPSF).



Major Caren M. Sterling is promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and appointed to the position of Director of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), making her the first woman in the history of the Virginia State Police to lead the bureau. She will serve as Co-Director alongside Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Lyon until his planned retirement on July 1, 2025.

Prior to her promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, Sterling served as a Deputy Director of BCI, Division Commander of the Bureau of Field Operations' (BFO) Chesapeake Division, and Lieutenant in the Professional Standards Unit. She has served with Virginia State Police since 2001, where she began as a trooper assigned to the Fairfax Division's Area 48 Office (Springfield). In 2005, she was promoted to Special Agent in BCI working in counterterrorism and intelligence collection and analysis assigned to the Virginia Fusion Center. She later served as a special agent conducting general investigations in the BCI Chesapeake Field Office prior to taking on supervisory roles in BFO and the Professional Standards Unit.

Sterling has a bachelor's degree in health education from Virginia Commonwealth University, a Master of Law from Regent University, and a *Juris Doctor* from Concord Law School. She is a graduate of the Virginia Forensic Science Academy, the IACP Women's Leadership Institute, and the University of Virginia's National Criminal Justice Command College.



Captain Gregory T. Mathias is promoted to the rank of Major and will serve as Deputy Director in the Bureau of Field Operations (BFO). Mathias has commanded the Virginia State Police (VSP) Aviation Division since November 2024 and has served with VSP since 1998.

Upon graduating the State Police Academy's 97th Basic Session, Mathias was assigned as a trooper to the BFO Richmond Division's Area 3 Office (West Point). In 2003, he was

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promoted to Sergeant and assigned to the BFO Chesapeake Division's Area 33 Office (Gloucester). In 2012, he transferred to the Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) where he served as an investigator until his 2013 promotion to First Sergeant in the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Chesapeake Field Office, Drug Enforcement Section. In 2015, he returned to BFO as Area 33 Commander. In 2017, he was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned to the BFO Chesapeake Division Headquarters where he remained upon his promotion to Division Commander in 2020.

A native of King William County, Virginia, Mathias has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in criminal justice from California Coast University, and he is a graduate of the University of Virginia's National Criminal Justice Command College.

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