

September 2004

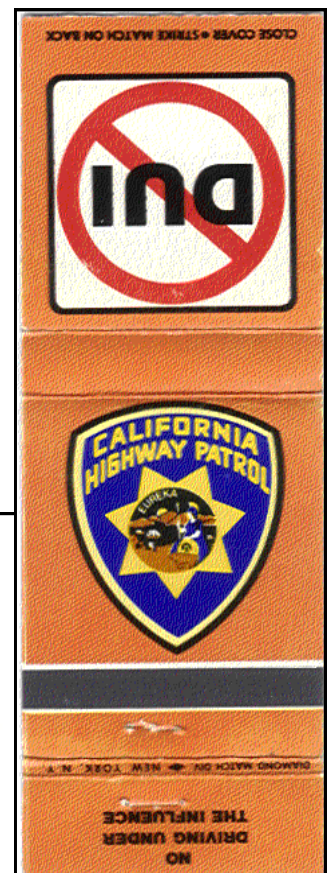
California Highway Patrol

by
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Since 1929, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) has been the primary agency to enforce the state's driving laws. As one of the world's premier law enforcement agencies, the CHP has been featured in hundreds of feature movies and television shows including "Highway Patrol" and "CHIPS".

On July 12, 1995, 271 uniformed officers of the State Police became part of the 5,713 sworn officers of the Highway Patrol. The 68 non-uniformed employees of the CSP transferred to existing civil service classifications, with the exception of CSP's Communications Operators who were assimilated into the CHP's Communications Operator II classification. The 269 uniformed personnel changed from California State Police classifications to new CHP classifications established specifically for the consolidation.

In recent years, the CHP's role has expanded into other, non-traffic functions including homeland security, Amber alert child abduction network, guarding state buildings, dignitary protection, and automobile theft. Currently, there are over 7,000 uniformed CHP officers, thanks to



additional officer positions approved over recent years by past Governor Davis. Besides the additional officers, 125 motorcycles were added to the fleet to help in the most crowded areas. Additional training has also been provided to reduce the time it takes to investigate and remove collisions from roadways.

The CHP is also heavily involved in monitoring the international agreement providing easier access to the U.S. for Mexico's trucks. "Just as we maintain outstanding working relationships with other state highway patrols, we look forward to a similar partnership with Mexico's law enforcement community," says CHP Commissioner D.O. "Spike" Helmick.

Senate Bill 2147 sponsored by State Senator Jack O'Connell gives Commissioner Dwight O. "Spike" Helmick the authorization to plan and construct a California Highway Patrol Museum on the Department's Academy grounds in West Sacramento. The bill requires the construction to be funded entirely with private contributions with the exception of eligible federal funds.

California Highway Patrol Academy Founded was 1930 in 1930. The original Academy was located at Mather Field near Sacramento. The first Academy class began on May 26, 1930, consisting of a two-week session for Inspectors and Captains. The first class for Traffic Officers began a few months later on September 16, 1930. The Academy later moved to the State Fairgrounds in Sacramento under the grandstands. This location presented a rugged endurance and survival test for cadets since the concrete grandstand leaked in rainy weather and it was almost impossible to heat the classroom and dormitory areas. A shortage of funds in 1938 caused the Academy to be suspended as a full-time training school and for the next 11 years it operated sporadically for recruit classes only.

The Academy was revived and given permanent status in 1948. The first fixed training facility was established in 1954 at a cost of approximately \$600,000 on Meadowview Road in South Sacramento. This facility encompassed 224 acres and was designed to house 80 resident students. Temporary buildings were added in 1965 to accommodate 360 resident students during the Patrol's expansion in 1966-1968. It readily became apparent that these temporary buildings would need to be replaced by a larger training facility. On September 17, 1974, groundbreaking ceremonies were held for a new Academy in Yolo County.

The present California Highway Patrol Academy is one of the most modern and complete law enforcement training academies in the United States. The Academy accommodates 280 students in dormitory rooms. The dining facility is designed to seat 400 persons. The multipurpose room serves as a gymnasium as well as an auditorium for graduation ceremonies. A large water safety tank is used to teach water safety and underwater vehicle extraction rescue training. An underwater viewing room allows students and instructors to observe rescue techniques as they are performed. *[info from <http://www.chp.ca.gov>]*

The front page here shows that there *are* CHP covers available for the collector, although I only have three, and I have no idea whether there are more or not *[perhaps one of our readers might send in additional info on this]*. It would be an interesting category, but probably much too small. Perhaps a larger "Police" category might be more practical. I know there are a number of covers from other police departments. We'll deal with that one in another issue.

All said and done, I'm a big supporter of the CHP....but I don't want to see one in my rear view mirror!