



State of Louisiana

**OFFICE OF
STATE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

DOTD

DISTRICT 3 – LAFAYETTE

MISUSE OF STATE VEHICLE

Report by

Inspector General Bill Lynch

Prepared for

Governor M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.

June 17, 2002

File No. 1-02-0077



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[Signature] Governor M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.

May 16, 2002

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DOTD

District 3 - Lafayette

Misuse of State Vehicle

Timothy Lejeune, maintenance superintendent for the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) in Lafayette, used the state truck assigned to him to haul his personal all-terrain vehicle, in violation of state law and agency policy. Also, Mr. Lejeune violated DOTD policy and exposed the state to unnecessary liability when he allowed his two young sons to accompany him in his state truck during highway inspections.

Background

District 3 of the Department of Transportation and Development covers eight parishes in south Louisiana, with administrative headquarters in Lafayette. The district administrator is William Fontenot.

Mr. Lejeune is the maintenance superintendent for District 3 and supervises about 20 employees responsible for the maintenance of potholes, signs, drainage and mowing along state roadways and the interstate highway. He has worked for DOTD for about 25 years. He is assigned a state-owned Dodge Ram pickup truck, has home storage authority and approval to use the truck to commute to and from work. He normally works out of a DOTD sub-office in Crowley.

Misuse of state truck

On at least three occasions, Mr. Lejeune used the state truck assigned to him to haul his personal all-terrain vehicle (ATV). He admitted that in December 2001, he used the state truck during the workday to pick up the ATV from the seller after purchasing it, and transport it to his home in Crowley. He said that in early March 2002, he used the state truck to haul the ATV to and from a repair shop.

According to DOTD management, agency policy restricts the use of the state truck assigned to Mr. Lejeune to official use only.

La. R.S. 42:1461 requires any public employee to “assume a personal obligation not to misappropriate, misapply, convert, misuse, or otherwise wrongfully take any funds, property, or other thing of value belonging to or under the custody or control of the public entity in which they hold office or are employed.”

Also, Mr. Lejeune admitted that on several occasions he allowed his 11-year-old twin sons to accompany him on highway inspections in his state truck.

DOTD policy prohibits unauthorized persons from being transported in state vehicles. Approval of exceptions to the policy may be made by the traveler’s supervisor if it is determined that the best interest of the state will be served and if a liability waiver is signed by the passenger.

Mr. Lejeune did not get approval from his supervisor and liability waivers were not signed.

Conclusion:

1. DOTD District 3 Maintenance Superintendent Timothy Lejeune violated state law and DOTD policy when he used his state truck to haul his personal ATV, and allowed unauthorized persons to accompany him in his state truck during highway inspections, exposing the state to unnecessary liability.

Recommendation:

2. Management at DOTD should take appropriate action concerning Mr. Lejeune's misuse of the state truck.

Management Response:

Attached is a response from District 3 Administrator William Fontenot.



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M. J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.
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May 14, 2002

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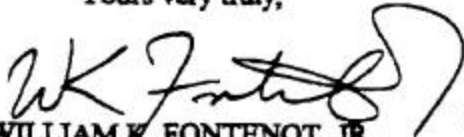
Dear Mr. Lynch:

This office has reviewed your draft report of findings concerning our employee Mr. Timothy Lejeune. Based upon our own conversation with Mr. Lejeune, we concur in the findings of your report.

Mr. Lejeune expresses remorse for his actions and we certainly regret his actions as well. We hope that our attitude of full support and cooperation during your investigation was obvious and helpful to you.

Mr. Lejeune will be dutifully disciplined in accordance with policies and procedures of the Louisiana DOTD. Dispensation of this disciplinary action is in process at this time with a minimum severity of time off without pay expected.

Yours very truly,


WILLIAM K. FONTENOT, JR.
DISTRICT ENGINEER ADMINISTRATOR

WKF/vh

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