

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**Review of the Maine Department of Public Safety  
under the Government Evaluation Act**

**The Government Evaluation Act**

The Government Evaluation Act provides for a system of periodic review of the efficacy and performance of state government agencies. The review of an agency's finances and programs must include a review of agency management and organization, program delivery, goals and objectives, statutory mandates and fiscal accountability. (See Title 3, Chapter 35.) The law was enacted by the 117th Legislature to replace the former Government Audit and Program Review Committee and substituted a legislative audit of each agency on a rotating basis with an agency self assessment.

The focus of the Government Evaluation Act is the agency program evaluation report that consists of a number of components required by the statute. The report is an agency self-assessment that the committee of jurisdiction uses as a starting point for its evaluation of the agency's effectiveness, efficiency and performance. The components that must be included in the report are: the agency's enabling state and federal legislation; program descriptions; organizational structure, position count and job classifications; compliance with federal and state health and safety laws; ten-year financial summaries; regulatory agenda; coordinated efforts with other state agencies; constituencies served by the agency; alternative delivery systems; and emerging issues for the agency.

**Review Process**

In April 2001, the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice notified the Department of Public Safety of its intent to review the department pursuant to the schedule established in 3 MRSA, §959. The Department of Public Safety submitted its program evaluation report in November 2001. The Department of Public Safety presented its report by bureau in public hearings to the Criminal Justice Committee on January 11th, January 25th and February 6th, 2002. The committee held work sessions on February 26th and March 6th, 2002 to recommend and review draft legislation pursuant to the review.

**Findings and Recommendations**

The Department of Public Safety was established pursuant to Title 25, Chapter 351 to coordinate and efficiently manage the law enforcement and public safety responsibilities of the State. The Commissioner serves at the pleasure of the Governor, subject to the review of the Joint Standing

Committee on Criminal Justice and is confirmed by the Legislature. The Department of Public Safety serves the people by protecting their lives, rights, and properties. This is accomplished through criminal justice, law enforcement, fire safety, and emergency response services provided by the department's nine bureaus or offices: the Bureau of State Police, the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement, the Office of the State Fire Marshal, the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, the Bureau of Highway Safety, the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency, the Bureau of Capitol Security, the Bureau of Emergency Services Communications and the Office of Emergency Medical Services.

The Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice finds that the Department of Public Safety is operating within its statutory authority. We recommend that the Department of Public Safety be reviewed again in 5 years. In addition to finding that the department is operating within its statutory authority, the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice reported out a bill, LD 2173, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice Regarding the Review of the Department of Public Safety under the State Government Evaluation Act, to implement statutory changes to address several immediate concerns identified by the department in its presentation of emerging issues.

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