**Pa. state police reassigned to gas drilling region as crime rises**

By ROBERT SWIFT

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Twenty-five state troopers have been reassigned to duty in the Marcellus Shale drilling region in Northeast Pennsylvania over the past two years in response to population growth and a corresponding increase in incidents, State Police Commissioner Frank Noonan told a Senate panel Thursday.

The troopers were transferred from other parts of the state and assigned to Troop P in Wyoming, Troop R in Dunmore and Troop F in Montoursville, said deputy commissioner Lt. Col. George Bivens.

Noonan spent much of his time before the Appropriations Committee discussing the juggling of manpower needs in light of 30 new responsibilities ranging from administering Megan's Law to casino law enforcement that state police have undertaken in the past decade.

"We will meet our mission no matter what our complement is," he said.

Gov. Tom Corbett has proposed a $210 million budget for the state police, reflecting an additional $7.9 million to train a new class of 115 cadets starting in June and money to replace high-mileage patrol vehicles. Additionally, the governor proposes earmarking an estimated $8 million in fines from tickets issued by troopers in municipalities they patrol to buy radios and protective equipment.

Noonan said his main challenge is making sure there are enough troopers for patrols on interstates and in the 70 percent of municipalities that lack or only have part-time police. The new cadet class may not be enough to offset retiring troopers who have at least 20 years of service.

Noonan plans to close two central dispatching centers to put 100 troopers back on patrol. He said the centers were opened a decade ago with the expectation that the 81 stations would be reduced to 55. That didn't happen, but Noonan said the agency is reviewing possibly closing or consolidating stations.