

TROOPER'S SEX LESSON



# State director killed sex probe

## Kasich's safety commissioner refuses further comment

REGISTER COLUMBUS FEB 15, 2014

Ohio public safety director John Born continued to dodge questions about the state agency's personnel practices Friday.

Months after investigations into a range of allegations from domestic violence to child abuse and falsification against three State Highway Patrol troopers surfaced, Born's office has shut down all comment.

The last response to an inquiry was Tuesday from his communications director, Joe Andrews.

"No complaint or allegation of misconduct concerning Trooper (Ricky) Vitte (Jr.) has been received by the Ohio State Highway Patrol," Andrews said. "No criminal charges have been filed in the case that precipitated the placement of Trooper Vitte on administrative duty."

A day earlier Andrews said the Patrol was reviewing information it had related to the complaint against Vitte.

Vitte allegedly watched porn and masturbated with a pre-teen boy. Sandusky County prosecutor Tom Stierwalt decided Jan. 10 not to file any charges, mainly, he later said, because Vitte could argue an affirmative defense he was teaching the boy to masturbate. Stierwalt has refused clarify or offer further comment on his decision, and he has failed to respond to a public records request for notes in the case file that might provide more information.

An Erie County child welfare caseworker asked for a criminal investigation after the agency learned of the allegations. The boy's mother told the caseworker she confronted Vitte and he admitted to her the incidents with the boy occurred, according to Sandusky County sheriff's detective Sean O'Connell. But Vitte was never interviewed by the sheriff's office during the criminal investigation. O'Connell wrote his report based on information provided by the child welfare agency.

When O'Connell and a deputy sought to question Vitte, he sped away from them driving a state police cruiser. He refused to talk with them after the chase ended. Vitte was not cited for any infractions as a result of the chase.

His attorney, Dean Henry, said Vitte has been falsely accused and denies every allegation made. Henry said he conferenced with Stierwalt about possible defense strategies — but not the affirmative defense Stierwalt cited — prior to Stierwalt's decision against pursuing charges.

Born was appointed director by Gov. John Kasich in July. He previously served as superintendent of the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He reviewed questions submitted to him by the Register concerning the Patrol's personnel policies but declined to respond to them.

A shifting leadership hierarchy in the state Department of Public Safety, which oversees the Patrol, and other recent personnel decisions regarding Vitte and two other Patrol troopers has focused attention on the agency's personnel practices and standards.

Trooper Shane Johnson, 43, who has been on paid sick leave from the Toledo post since August, was arraigned in December on a first-degree misdemeanor domestic violence charge. Patrol Sgt. Eric Gonzalez was demoted last year and transferred to the Fremont Highway Patrol post after he allegedly gave the Perrysburg Police wrong information in filing a report about alleged child abuse.

Vitte also was accused of a domestic violence incident in 2003 in which he allegedly beat a 5-year-old and head-butted the child's mother after she became upset. He pleaded out to a reduced charge of child endangering and was returned to full service as a trooper immediately after the case was



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resolved. In January, he was again returned to full service immediately after Stierwalt opted against filing charges.

Born, Andrews and Patrol spokeswoman Lt. Anne Ralston have all refused to comment on whether it is a violation of Patrol policy for a trooper driving a state police cruiser to evade a police stop by another agency. Andrews also on Tuesday said information he and Ralston had provided the Register earlier about the status of a review of the Vitte complaint was incorrect.

In 2010, then-Gov. Ted Strickland ordered the director of the Department of Public Safety to [fire two Ohio State Patrol troopers](#) after the Register reported an incident in which one of the troopers dressed in a hooded makeshift KKK uniform while on duty. The second trooper snapped cell phone photos of the costume and texted them to other Patrol personnel as a joke.

The officers were later reinstated after arbitration, but one was later fired again after he [attempted to blame a passenger](#) in his car for a DUI crash the trooper caused.

Born did not respond to a request on Wednesday for an interview. Andrews did respond to a followup request on Friday but the email he sent was not responsive to the questions he was asked.

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NOTE: This post has been modified to reflect that Andrews did respond to an inquiry on Feb. 14.

## Comments

### Dcfred20036

FRI, 02/14/2014 - 8:25PM

Maybe the Feds need to look into the case: if the trooper had any internet computer communication with the pre-teen re the so-called, alleged sex lesson, this may actually be a violation of federal law.

### Truth2u

SUN, 02/16/2014 - 1:26PM

WATCHING PORN WITH A MINOR IS A FELONY !!!

Salary of \$83,000, had protection and restraining orders against him, spanked his 5 year old until he bled for wetting the bed, head bunted his wife, and he's still carrying a gun! This video is revealing! Share it on your facebook!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4...>

Would be great to ask his father if he was till a trooper if he would arrest his son for this.. Maybe the apple didn't fall too far from the tree? I sure would like to know.

### lugnut2511

FRI, 02/14/2014 - 8:39PM

This is some serious BS! Our government is covering up for one another like they're is no corruption. every single day there's some politician in the paper about doing this and doing that, most of it being caught up in some illegal activity, yet the investigation always seems to just stop, without cause.

### rbenn

SAT, 02/15/2014 - 8:59AM

I received a response from Mike Dewine on this, basically he said he wont review this and believes the county is doing a fine job. So he basically said he don't give a rats butt and move along.

### justice\_forall2014

SAT, 02/15/2014 - 9:13AM

I also received an email from the AG office. The majority of the email details how much of a family man he is and then went on to say basically they have no power over the prosecutors decision. Also said their job is to do an investigation only if requested by the prosecutor or law enforcement.