



# LOUISIANA STATE POLICE

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**COLONEL ROBERT P. HODGES**  
SUPERINTENDENT



**Written Testimony of Colonel Robert P. Hodges**  
**U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security**  
**Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States**  
**July 22, 2025**

## **Resilience in Action: Louisiana State Police's Unprecedented Start to 2025**

Distinguished Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. I am Colonel Robert Hodges, Superintendent of the Louisiana State Police (LSP). I was born and raised in New Orleans and have served this great state for over 30 years. During that time, I've held a variety of positions in Patrol and Investigations, culminating in my appointment as Superintendent in January 2024.

I am here today to provide an overview of how Louisiana navigated extraordinary public safety challenges in 2025, ranging from terrorism to extreme weather. This testimony reflects not only what we've endured but what we've achieved through resilience and partnership.

### **January 1, 2025: Vehicle-Ramming Terrorist Attack**

On New Year's Day 2025, just after 3:00 a.m., a vehicle bypassed police barricades and plowed into pedestrians on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Fourteen lives were tragically lost, and dozens more were injured. This was not a tragic accident—it was confirmed by federal partners to be a terrorist attack.

LSP Troopers and local first responders immediately rendered aid and secured the scene. Due to longstanding partnerships with Homeland Security Investigations, the FBI, and the ATF, LSP initially took complete control of the scene, allowing a rapid stabilization while federal teams mobilized to begin their investigation. Agencies across multiple states worked together to identify and locate the suspect.

In the wake of the attack, and with the Sugar Bowl scheduled just days later, public safety priorities immediately shifted. LSP and its partners implemented an expanded security plan that delayed the College Football Playoff game by only one day, demonstrating the strength of interagency coordination and our shared commitment to public safety.

## Snowstorm, Super Bowl, and Mardi Gras: Resilience in Action

As we began preparations for Super Bowl LIX, Louisiana was struck by a historic snowstorm that brought over 12 inches of snow to New Orleans. The city was effectively paralyzed, with roadways coated in ice, access routes shut down, and emergency services stretched to the limit. Nonetheless, LSP Troopers continued operations—conducting rescues, securing roads, and pressing forward with Super Bowl preparations.

On February 9, 2025, Super Bowl LIX went forward without incident. More than 500 LSP and DPS personnel and over 300 National Guard members were deployed, including in the French Quarter's Enhanced Security Zone. The operation demonstrated the effectiveness of planning, discipline, and community coordination.

Immediately afterward, our attention turned to Mardi Gras. Enhanced safety protocols remained in place throughout the state. Over 150 Troopers and DPS personnel were deployed for the Carnival season to ensure secure, accessible celebrations.

## Conclusion

In a three-month span, Louisiana overcame a terrorist attack, a paralyzing snowstorm, and multiple high-risk public events. These experiences tested our infrastructure, systems, and resolve, but they also reinforced our readiness, unity, and mission focus.

Louisiana State Police has demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and professionalism. Our efforts have been grounded in partnership with our federal colleagues, local agencies, and the people of Louisiana.

Through these events, we confirmed the need for several critical resources from the Department of Homeland Security, including the Special Event Assessment Rating (SEAR), TFR expansions and UAS mitigation, and funding for training and equipment.

Once Super Bowl LIX was approved as a SEAR 1 event, the deployment of over 100 explosive detection canine teams significantly increased the ability to provide pre-event sweeps of several large venues throughout the week of Super Bowl activities.

Furthermore, the allowance for TFR expansions and UAS mitigation efforts enabled LSP to collaborate with local and federal public safety agencies to establish a Drone Mitigation Team. This team identified over 250 TFR violations and intercepted over 80 pilots violating the temporary flight restriction.

The SEAR 1 classification also opened funding sources for training and equipment, including additional robotic and x-ray devices for explosive detection and other tactical enhancements.

The challenges we faced were unprecedented, but the lessons learned will shape our path forward.

As we say in our department: One Team. One Dream. One Louisiana.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I welcome your questions.

Sincerely,

Colonel Robert P. Hodges  
Superintendent, Louisiana State Police  
Deputy Secretary, Department of Public Safety