

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Depending on what the Nebraska Legislature decides about budget cuts in the special session that began Wednesday, Imperial could be receiving a second Nebraska State Patrolman again. Currently, Trooper Dan Thompson is the only patrolman stationed here.

Capt. Jim Parrish of the State Patrol in North Platte said the process of selection of troopers began in June. If the legislature funds training, those selected have six months of basic training, followed by five months of riding with another trooper, then four months of probation.

Parrish said it could be seven to eight months, or in a worse case scenario, one and one-half to two years before Imperial receives a second officer.

Originally, basic training camp was to have begun in October, Parrish said. Then it was put on hold until this month's special session of the legislature is held.

It's important for Imperial to have a second trooper, Parrish said, because of the large area covered by Thompson.

"A trooper works eight hours a day," he said, so when he's not working, someone else needs to cover that time.

Troopers from McCook currently cover the time Thompson isn't working, Parrish said. "That's some distance away," so "logistically, things work better if we have two troopers in Imperial."

Parrish said the State Patrol looks at crash data and traffic data to determine where troopers are needed. Chase County, he said, has a high rate of traffic accidents.