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**Public safety commissioner resigns;
Globe series to focus on elevator inspections;
David Armstrong and Shelley Murphy of the Globe staff assisted in the
preparation of this report.**

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On the eve of publication of a Globe investigation about lax state inspection of the 25,000 elevators and escalators in Massachusetts, the head of the state agency that regulates the industry submitted his resignation yesterday.

Public Safety Commissioner Larry F. Giordano stepped down unexpectedly, citing "personal reasons," after informing his bosses of the Globe's probe of his agency's performance in inspecting elevators and escalators.

Giordano, a former Democratic state representative from Methuen, was named **Public Safety commissioner** by Weld in 1992.

A three-part series that begins in tomorrow's Globe will focus on the alarming increase in elevator and escalator accidents nationwide and in Massachusetts, and the failure by state regulators to stem the problem. The series is based on a four-month investigation by a team of Globe reporters.

Public Safety Secretary Kathleen M. O'Toole, who oversees the public safety and correction departments, State Police and other law enforcement agencies, said she had not sought Giordano's resignation, and praised his enthusiasm and honesty.

However, when Giordano informed her of the Globe probe and his understanding of its findings Thursday night, she said, she told him that it "sounds pretty serious to me . . . it sounds to me like we'll be working on some significant disciplinary stuff next week."

Giordano gave her no indication that he was about to submit his resignation.

Giordano denied last night that his resignation was prompted by any Globe finding, saying Weld should be allowed to select a whole new team for his second term in office. However, Giordano said, "I was disappointed about some of the things I learned" from the Globe reporting. "I think the new people will be able to look at it and make needed changes."

The Public Safety department, which Giordano heads, employs 31 inspectors to examine elevators and escalators annually. Since his appointment as commissioner, Giordano had persuaded the Weld administration to add seven new inspectors to the job.

O'Toole said Giordano's departure, effective Jan. 1, will allow her to improve the management of the Public Safety department and its 700 employees.

O'Toole named William Baker, her second in command, as acting commissioner and Donna Bonaparte, her chief of staff, as acting deputy commissioner.

"There needs to be serious reorganization of that department, and this will give us the opportunity to move quickly to make the changes that need to be made," O'Toole said.

O'Toole said she did not know the precise reasons for Giordano's resignation, but said he has been telling her for several weeks that he was thinking about stepping down.

Hours before delivering his letter of resignation to O'Toole, Giordano sent to her a file containing the public documents the Globe had requested during its investigation. Public Safety officials who asked not to be named said that O'Toole had not reviewed the file, but that others in the office had.

In addition to inspecting elevators and escalators, the Public Safety department oversees the state fire marshal's office and enforces the state building code.

O'Toole said she informed Gov. Weld's office of the resignation.

"Larry Giordano has been as hard-working and decent as anyone could expect, and I have nothing but praise for him personally," she said.

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