

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: October 5, 2011 REPORT NO. 11-132
ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
Agenda of September 21, 2011
SUBJECT: San Diego Police Department 7-Point Plan

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

Over the past year, the San Diego Police Department has experienced a spike in officer misconduct. Police misconduct that goes unaddressed tarnishes the reputation and undermines the moral of a department. Rather than minimize and make excuses for this increase, the San Diego Police Department has taken this problem head on by actively investigating and prosecuting those officers who violate the law as well as creating a comprehensive plan to address the problem.

The San Diego Police Department is pursuing a universal approach to addressing police misconduct, one which will begin at recruitment and will continue through the course of an entire career in law enforcement. We will continue to aggressively investigate and remove those individuals who misuse their authority, and equally as important, we will work to promote an organization that values its employees as well as instills solid values and ethics in its members.

The plan involves all aspects of prevention, training, education, intervention and investigation. This diverse strategy will allow us to create a department that reflects our values and provides the service to the community we can all be proud of.

This report will discuss each point and its elements. Under each point there is updated information on what has occurred since implementing this 7-Point Plan.

DISCUSSION

Key elements of this plan include:

1. **Increase staffing in the Internal Affairs Unit.**

In order to decrease the length of time it takes to complete investigates complete a citizen complaints and officer misconduct cases, the Department added a Lieutenant and 4 Sergeants bringing the current unit staffing to two lieutenants, twelve sergeants, two detectives and one word processing operator. With additional personnel, cases will be investigated quicker and therefore any misconduct can be addressed sooner.

2. **Conduct Supervisor Training in the areas of Ethics, Leadership, and our Early Identification Intervention System.**

All supervisors will attend a training course that will focus on such areas as ethics, leadership, and our Early Identification Intervention System.

- During the months of July and August 2011, all lieutenants and sergeants attended a two-day course which included topics on Ethics and Leadership, and our Early Identification Intervention System (E.I.I.S.).
- Ethics and leaderships topics have been incorporated into the Regional Officer Training at the police academy. All Sergeants and officers are required to attend this training every two years.
- Our current Early Identification Intervention System is being evaluated for best use practices.
- Ethics and Leadership are being discussed at patrol line-ups and unit meetings throughout the police department.
- Academy recruits receive several hours of training on professional conduct and ethics at the police academy.

3. **24/7 Anonymous confidential complaint hot line.**

The Department set up a confidential dedicated telephone line where anyone can leave information concerning officer misconduct or any information they would like to communicate. The telephone number is 531-2672. The hotline is active and is reviewed by the Chief of Police daily.

4. **Review Department Discipline Manual**

The Department will complete a comprehensive review of its current discipline manual and makes changes where appropriate.

- A thorough review of our discipline manual is currently being conducted. We are studying and evaluating best practices from other police agencies.
- The discipline manual will contain comprehensive discipline procedures and will outline a range of levels of discipline for inappropriate employee conduct.

5. **Review Department's Use of Force training and tactics.**

- This review is currently underway. We are specifically reviewing distraction techniques and take-down procedures utilized by uniformed officers.

- Our training practices and procedures are constantly being evaluated for best practices and compliance with California Peace Officers Standards of Training (P.O.S.T.).
6. **Add a wellness assessment to the annual evaluation process.**
The Department has added a wellness component to each member's annual evaluation where each supervisor will do a personal assessment of each officer and discuss available resources and services if needed.

In addition, the Department has taken the bold and innovative move of creating a Wellness Unit headed by a Captain. This proactive unit will help employees get help with on-the-job stresses and problems at home before things take a turn for the worst. The Wellness Unit will be a one-stop shop where members can confidentially access the various resources and programs available throughout the Department and the City. The Wellness Unit is housed at the Family Justice Center located at 1122 Broadway.

7. **Conduct a series of meetings with the entire department.**
The Chief of Police has addressed the entire San Diego Police Department in a series of 13 meetings to discuss his new plan and make clear his expectations for all members of the Department. All members were given the opportunity to provide comments or ask questions of the Chief.

CONCLUSION

This will not be a one-time communications campaign. This is a shift in the organization that reinforces who we are, our mission and our professional code of conduct. We will make continual efforts to ensure that our member's personal values remain aligned with our organizational and professional values. Reinforcing our values at all levels will be a unifying theme throughout this plan.

We will recommit ourselves to becoming a police department that is deserving of the public trust, and demonstrates, first and foremost, that we are capable of policing ourselves.

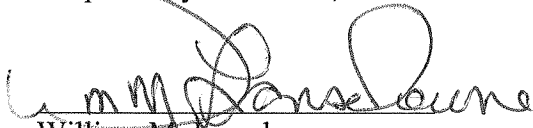
It is critical that we learn from the mistakes of others who have made wrong decisions, and take advantage of what may be "teachable" moments for our employees. We will explore possible academic partnerships for qualitative case studies of risk factors and variables that lead to police misconduct. Findings from these efforts will be used to enhance our training, improve our supervision, and change our procedures.

We will work together toward creating an environment that promotes open communication. Supervisors and managers are often aware of the signs that may lead to misconduct long before there is a formal organizational response. We will provide support and training to help identify at risk behavior for personnel under their command. We will also make the appropriate staffing adjustments to ensure a reasonable span of control is maintained for each supervisor.

Any act of misconduct on the part of our employees not only undermines the public trust, but also affects the thousands of police officers who proudly wear or have worn the uniform and badge of the San Diego Police Department. Those who dishonor the badge also dishonor those who have given their lives in service to others. The vast majority of officers are hard-working,

dedicated and committed to helping others. Every day they perform their duties and responsibilities in a manner consistent with our values of honor, service and integrity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William M. Lansdowne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent loop at the end of the name.

William M. Lansdowne
Chief of Police