



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: February 25, 2013 REPORT NO. 13-20
ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
Agenda of March 13, 2013
SUBJECT: Updates to the San Diego Police Department Seven-Point Plan

SUMMARY

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

BACKGROUND

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 provide the service to the community we can all be proud of. The initial plan was presented to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee on September 21, 2011. An update to the plan was provided to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee on May 16, 2012. This report includes updated information related to each item within the Police Department's Seven-Point Plan since implementation.

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 investigations, complete citizen complaints and officer misconduct cases, the Department added a Lieutenant and four Sergeants to the Internal Affairs Unit. These additional positions bring the current staffing level to two Lieutenants, twelve Sergeants, three Detectives and one Word Processing Operator. With additional personnel, cases will be investigated quicker and, therefore, any misconduct will be addressed sooner.

UPDATE:

- The Internal Affairs Unit continues to operate at this staffing level.

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.

UPDATE:

- During the summer of 2012, 320 Lieutenants, Sergeants, and acting Sergeants attended a two-day course that focused on leadership and conduct, both on- and off-duty. Topics included ethics, accountability, discipline and EIIS.
- Our EIIS was evaluated and modifications were made to enhance the system's effectiveness. Evaluation of the EIIS system will continue on an ongoing basis.
- Mandatory EIIS inspections are conducted by supervisors on a quarterly basis.
- Ethics and leadership topics have been incorporated into Advanced Officer Training (AOT) at the Police Academy. All Sergeants and Officers are required to attend this training every two years, where leadership and ethical principals are discussed, with a strong emphasis placed on accountability.
- A portion of the next two-year cycle for AOT, which began in September 2012, again reinforces the importance of these critical core values at all levels of the Police Department. In addition to these training sessions, ethics and leadership principles continue to be discussed throughout the entire Police Department at patrol line-ups and unit meetings.
- Each newly promoted Sergeant will attend an 80-hour school that provides a comprehensive overview of leadership and ethics, with a strong emphasis placed on accountability.
- Academy recruits continue to receive several hours of training specific to professional conduct and ethics at the regional Police Academy. Additionally, these topics are woven into other classes, particularly scenario-based training and role play exercises. Ethically-based decision making is stressed throughout the six-month Basic Academy Course.

3. 24/7 anonymous confidential complaint hotline

The Department established a confidential dedicated telephone line where anyone can leave information concerning officer misconduct or any information they would like to communicate. The hotline number is (619) 531-2672 and it is reviewed daily by the Chief of Police.

UPDATE:

The confidential hotline was implemented in May 2011. The hotline continues to be operational. The line was publicized both internally within the San Diego Police Department, as well as externally to the public. The messages have been retrieved daily and reviewed by the Chief of Police. During the first month of operation, a total

of 102 messages were received (representing the highest number of any month period). Since inception, through December 2012, the confidential hotline received a total of 435 messages. During the month of December 2012, only 4 messages were received.

The majority of messages have included questions related to procedural issues, Department operations, and /or neighborhood problems. Other messages included complaints and compliments for police employees, referral requests, internal suggestions, information related to other law enforcement organizations, or general comments unrelated to law enforcement. Some callers left names and contact information, however, many chose to remain anonymous. A number of repeat callers left dozens of messages (30 in one case) each repeating the same message. In all cases, the information was reviewed then, if appropriate, assigned to the proper unit within the Department for follow-up. Messages intended for other law enforcement organizations were sent to the appropriate Department heads. In all cases where the message included contact information, a Department representative followed up with the caller.

The confidential hotline continues to be publicized internally and externally through public and internal Police Department websites, Department bulletin boards and on wall posters in the lobby of each of the nine area commands and Traffic Division. The overall success of the confidential hotline lies in the simplicity of its operation and the ability to keep the messages confidential and anonymous. We believe releasing additional specific information related to the messages left on confidential hotline may jeopardize the program.

It should be noted that during the same time the Department created the confidential hotline, another program, the San Diego Police Department Wellness Unit, was created to provide our employees with support, guidance, and counseling, when needed. The Wellness Unit developed their own access telephone line specifically for employees and their family members. The staff assigned to the Wellness Unit follow-up on each of those calls.

4. Review the Department's Discipline Manual

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

UPDATE:

- The Department completed a comprehensive review of the Department's Discipline Manual and discipline process.
- Best practices were evaluated from fourteen major police agencies inside and outside the state of California.
- The Discipline Manual was updated at the end of 2012, complete with templates to conform with current case laws and the discipline process.
- Completed discussions regarding the updated Discipline Manual with the SDPOA.
- All Department command staff were trained on the updated Discipline Manual.
- Training was provided to 320 Lieutenants, Sergeants and acting Sergeants during the two-day leadership course over the summer of 2012.

- Newly promoted Sergeants will be provided training on the use of the Discipline Manual.
- The Discipline Manual was placed in the Department's online Resource Library for reference and easy access for our employees.

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

Evaluate the Department's training procedures for best practices and compliance with California Peace Officers Standards of Training (POST).

UPDATE:

- The Department's Use of Force Committee meets regularly to review practices, trends, and training related to the application of force.
- Best practices continue to be taught at the regional Police Academy and our Training Division continues to constantly evaluate our practices and procedures to ensure compliance with California Peace Officers Standards of Training (POST).
- During our current AOT, Use of Force procedures are discussed and scenario-based training provided.
- Community outreach is encouraged with programs such as "Inside the San Diego Police Department".

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 conduct a personal assessment of each officer and discuss available resources and services, if needed.

In addition, the Department created a Wellness Unit headed by a San Diego Police Department Captain. This innovative and proactive unit will help employees get help with on-the-job stresses and issues at home before problems occur. The Wellness Unit is a one-stop shop where members can confidentially access the various resources and programs available throughout the Department and the City.

The Wellness Unit was housed at the Family Justice Center located at 1122 Broadway. The Wellness Unit was recently moved to the 7th floor of Police Headquarters building. It was felt that our employees could be better served by having the Wellness Unit in the same building where many of our employees work. The Wellness Unit staff will still meet with employees in private or confidentially, if requested.

UPDATE:

The Wellness Unit is currently staffed by a Captain, a Sergeant, and two Officers. The Wellness Unit is committed to removing and reducing interferences to employee wellness by:

- Identifying and enhancing existing resources.
- Developing and providing wellness education.

- Collaborating with academic institutions on innovative Law Enforcement studies.
- Developing partnerships with health and wellness providers.
- Staying abreast of wellness program best practices through research.
- Developing and administering a fitness and preventative health incentive program.
- Serving as an advocate for employees enduring personal or professional difficulties.

Recently, existing resources accessible through the Wellness Unit were enhanced as follows:

- The Member Assistance Program (MAP), which includes members of the Department who are willing to provide support, guidance and other resources, increased from 25 members to 52 members. A new MAP member class was provided in September 2012.
- The Peer Support Team is comprised of Officers who are trained to provide support and guidance to Officers involved in Officer-Involved-Shootings or any other very traumatic incidents. The team was expanded from 25 to 40 members after a training academy was held in December 2012.
- The Department's Chaplain Program was expanded from 14 to 18 chaplains. A full day of training was held in February 2012.
- The Wellness Unit has met with key leaders from Kaiser and Sharp Health Care to establish relationships aimed at allowing our employees to be fully educated about all of the benefits available to them through their respective care providers. The Wellness Unit was provided with contact information for immediate troubleshooting of any issues our employees encounter while attempting to obtain necessary care for themselves or their family.

Since our last update in May 2012, the Wellness Unit has sponsored and provided several training sessions and seminars in many areas, including, nutritional education, health and fitness education, financial services, and coping with the stress of the job, just to name a few. The Wellness Unit also publishes monthly newsletters that are sent out to all of the employees and contain valuable information regarding wellness issues in a variety of different areas.

The Wellness Unit formed a county-wide wellness group that meets bi-monthly and includes representation from all of the county police agencies as well as US Border Patrol, ICE, FBI, DEA, NCIS, US Marshals, and representatives from all of the psychological service providers for many of the listed agencies.

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.

UPDATE: These meetings were completed in 2011.

CONCLUSION

Through this seven-point plan, the San Diego Police Department has taken bold and innovative measures to improve the organization in areas of supervision and accountability, balanced with a real concern for officer health and well being. It is my strong belief that the San Diego Police Department has emerged from the events of 2011 a much stronger and improved organization; an organization that continues to be committed to honor, service and integrity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William M. Lansdowne', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

William M. Lansdowne
Chief of Police