

SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT USE OF FORCE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approximately one year ago, in response to growing local and nation-wide concern regarding use of force by law enforcement, Chief David Bejarano of the San Diego Police Department formed a Task Force to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the Department's use of force policies and procedures. The Task Force's creation was announced during a City Council workshop in which the local concern over use of force issues was discussed. The Task Force's analysis included a review of Department policies and procedures in the areas of force, both lethal and non-lethal, training, pursuits, media issues, community issues, and interactions with the homeless and the mentally ill. As a result of this endeavor, the Task Force presents the following 100 recommendations for the Department's and the community's consideration and implementation.

The Task Force is comprised of 137 members – 71 community members and 66 members of the San Diego Police Department. The review was conducted by nine teams: four teams reviewed the various force procedures; the remaining five teams reviewed pursuit procedures, training, community issues, media issues, and mental health/homeless issues. The nine teams met regularly during the past year, sought input from the public and police officers, and submitted their recommendations to an Oversight Committee consisting of 18 community members and 16 members of the Department. Throughout their analysis, each committee's members reviewed past task force work, engaged in patrol ridealongs, attended academy training, and specifically sought input from the public. The Oversight Committee was tasked with coordinating the team's efforts and finalizing – without changing -- the various team recommendations for presentation to the community and the Department.

Throughout the course of the Task Force review, three fundamental themes developed: (1) increasing the quality and quantity of communication between police officers and citizens at every level of interaction; (2) providing officers with all of the tools, training and reasonable and appropriate force options necessary to increase citizen and officer safety and law enforcement effectiveness; and (3) enhancing the community policing model presently used to lessen and ultimately eliminate the “us v. them” syndrome that so often exists between officers and the citizens they serve. The recommendations being presented in this report all relate to these three themes. It is the firm belief of the Task Force that the implementation of these recommendations will improve the overall quality and professionalism of the Department.

Beyond the recommendations presented, the Task Force review has also made it clear that, for any of its efforts to succeed, the citizens of San Diego and the Department must form a partnership, a community alliance, to work together and to reaffirm that we are all in this together. We must strengthen our understanding that we are dependent upon each other for our safety, that our ultimate goal is an effective Police Department that is both respectful of the community it polices and respected by that same community. We must also understand that only together will we succeed. This community alliance is therefore fundamental to the implementation of every recommendation made by this Task Force.

Early in our process, the Task Force focused on this alliance by ensuring that, in its structure and interactions, neither the community members nor the members of the Department controlled or directed the dialog. Together, in partnership, we discussed sensitive and contentious issues; together we broke down barriers. And, together we faced the reality of the attitude of “us v. them” that exists on both sides of the so-called “blue line.” All of us on the Task Force learned that these barriers are a creation of both the community and the Department

and that we are all responsible for their elimination. To truly break down these barriers, dialog must continue and we must remember that we are all (officers and citizens alike) part of the same community. Ultimately, each of us has the same interest in the improved safety and well-being of our community.

It is easy to review what an organization is doing and identify what can be done better. The difficult part is changing past beliefs and practices. We are engaged in a continuous process, and without that partnership and commitment, no real change can occur. For change to succeed there must be an absolute commitment from every element of Department leadership, beginning at the top, coupled with the fullest possible support from the officers on the street.

In the past, there have been similar task forces, similarly motivated and well intentioned. Each time, the police and citizens came together; each time, policies and procedures were examined; each time, the standards were raised; and each time this partnership was dissolved and the dialog and collaboration ended. That cannot be permitted to happen again. The Task Force must remain constituted to track its recommendations and develop additional recommendations, as appropriate. The Department must be committed, as a matter of policy, to continue its dialog with the citizens of San Diego.

To that end, the recommendations presented here are but the beginning of a process that will require every citizen to work toward the common goal of citizens and officers interacting with mutual respect, cooperation, and enhanced communication.

USE OF FORCE TASK FORCE

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USE OF FORCE TASK FORCE

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RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

Adopt the revised version of Department Procedure 1.04 “Use of Force” policy, attached hereto as Tab A.

Foundation

Although this Department Procedure was revised in 1998-99, it still required clarification and organization. The document was difficult for a lay person to read, and it lacked a foundational statement of values.

Information Considered

The committee, composed of a diverse group of officers and community members, reviewed similar procedures from agencies across the United States and provided significant input. The Department’s in-house Use of Force Review Board and a Chief Deputy City Attorney specializing in force cases provided contributions.

Objective

To provide the community, department members, and others, a policy better suited to evaluation and understanding.

Evaluation Criteria

The Police Citizen’s Review Board, the Internal Affairs Section, and the Department’s Use of Force Review Board frequently study and use this policy in completing their assigned investigations and critiques. Six months after approval of this policy revision, we recommend follow-up contact with these entities to determine any improvement in clarity, application or interpretation.

Cost

Review and approval of this policy revision by a Police Legal Advisor may entail additional costs. Following this review, it will be submitted with other D.P. revisions for printing. None of the changes requires immediate re-training of personnel.

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Alternative language for the background section of 1.04 was suggested by Task Force members. The alternative language suggested reads:

The highest priority of the San Diego Police Department is the protection and preservation of human life. It is the policy and practice of the Department to train its officers in the use of the most current, safest, and humane restraint procedures and force options available. The Department will demonstrate integrity, fairness, good judgment, and respect for the law in all its policies and decisions.

In the performance of their duties, officers will only use that force, as authorized by Penal Code Section 835 (a), that is necessary to effect a detention or arrest, to overcome resistance, or to protect themselves or others from serious injury. Only reasonable force may be used, and whether force is reasonable or not, is determined by the circumstances which require its application. The decision to use deadly force in response to an immediate threat of death or serious bodily to an officer, or other person, is the most critical decision an officer will ever be called upon to make.

Officers shall accomplish their duties in a manner that minimizes the need for force and maximizes voluntary compliance. The Department deeply values community trust, and knows that this trust in law enforcement must be based on the Community's belief that officers will act fairly.

Members of the Task Force made the following additional comments on the proposed changes to Department Procedure 1.04:

1. **BACKGROUND** section paragraph 2:

In the performance of their duties, officers may encounter situations where the use of force is reasonable in order to effect a detention or arrest, to overcome resistance, or to protect themselves or others ~~from serious injury~~. Force as authorized by Penal Code section 835a, and as set forth in this policy, may be used in those situations. The decision to use deadly force in response to an immediate threat of death or serious bodily to the officer or another person is one of the most critical decisions an officer will ever be called upon to make. Only force, which is reasonable to overcome resistance **and gain control of a subject**, may be used to effect a detention or an arrest ~~or take a mentally ill or emotional disturbed person into protective custody~~.

Officers use force to protect from harm and any type of injury, not just serious injury. There would be problems in court trying to define what injury would be **"serious"** to warrant the use of force. Some members of the committee felt that the proposed language states that officers will only use force to protect from serious injury.

"And gain control of a subject" adds closure to statement.

"Only force, which is reasonable to overcome resistance and gain control of a subject, may be used to effect a detention or an arrest or take a mentally ill or emotional disturbed person into protective custody" is a confusing sentence. Taking a mentally ill person into

protective custody is a detention and is covered in the main portion of the sentence. To highlight the mentally ill or emotionally disturbed implies we use different standards to apply force to various groups of people. Some members of the committee recommend that the Department delete “**or take a mentally ill or emotionally disturbed person into protective custody**”.

2. **BACKGROUND** - the last two paragraphs should remain from the original background section and included as the last paragraph of the background section. These two sentences set the standard for Department review of force complaints and need to be in Department procedures.

The U.S. Supreme Court in Graham v. Conner, 490 U.S. 386 (1989), acknowledged that the “reasonableness” test in analyzing the use of force is “not capable of precise definition or mechanical application.” For that reason, in determining whether an officer’s use of force is reasonable in a particular case, it is necessary to evaluate the facts and circumstances’ confronting the officer at the time force was used. **The evaluation of an officer’s use of force will be undertaken from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, not through the 20/20 vision of hindsight. The central inquiry in every use of force case is whether the amount of force used by the officer was objectively reasonable in light of the particular circumstances faced by the officer.**

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

Adopt the revised use of force “matrix,” attached hereto as Tab B.

Foundation

This force matrix, which is a quick-reference guide and summary of the text in Department Procedure 1.04 was revised in 1998-99, but required further clarification and organization.

Information Considered

The committee reviewed many similar procedures from agencies across the United States. A diverse group of officers and community members had ample input into the revisions. The committee also obtained input from the Department’s in-house Use of Force Review Board.

Objective

Revision of this matrix would provide a better understanding of it by the community, department members, or any other entity.

Evaluation Criteria

The Police Citizen’s Review Board, the Internal Affairs Section, and the Department’s Use of Force Review Board frequently study and use this procedure in completing their assigned investigations and critiques. Six months after approval of this revision, these entities could be surveyed to determine any improvement in clarity, application or interpretation of this procedure.

Cost

None, can be submitted with other routinely revised D.P.s for printing. None of the changes requires immediate re-training of personnel.

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Although the Task Force unanimously agreed to the revision of the Force Matrix (see attached), several Oversight Committee members felt that the additional text the Task Force included created a more cumbersome matrix. These members felt the proposed matrix was not as simple graphically as the current matrix. They preferred that the matrix stay in its current form. The Task Force heard their concerns, yet, believed the revised matrix are an improvement over the current matrix.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

Adopt the revised version of Department Procedure 4.01, "Stops, Detentions and Pat-down Procedures," attached hereto as Tab C.

Foundation

This Department Procedure was last revised in 1994. It was in need of updating, clarification and organization.

Information Considered

The committee reviewed examples of recent case law provided by the District Attorney's Liaison to the Department. The D.A. Liaison also provided training to the subcommittee, in person. A diverse group of officers and community members had ample input into the revisions.

Objective

Revision of this procedure would provide a better understanding and an easier critique of it by the community, department members, or any other entity.

Evaluation Criteria

The Police Citizen's Review Board, the Internal Affairs Section, and the Department's Use of Force Review Board frequently study and use this procedure in completing their assigned investigations and critiques. Officers use the principles outlined in this procedure virtually everyday in the discharge of their duties. Survey instruments should be written so as to measure baseline data regarding the application or interpretation of this procedure. Six months after approval of this revision, these entities, and a diverse sampling of officers and community members, could be surveyed to determine any improvement in the understanding of police contacts and detentions, and any impact the changes had in the officers' ability to perform their duties.

Cost

Soft cost may be incurred for development of survey instruments, and for a Police Legal Advisor to review and approve these changes. Then it can be submitted with other routinely revised D.P.s for printing. One specific change would require a Department Announcement or Training Bulletin.

Funding

N/A

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4:

The Automated Field Reporting (“AFR”) system should be revised to capture, in a pull-down menu, any use of force information, similar to how information on domestic violence is now captured.

Foundation

The organization can track and monitor the use of force by having its officers capture related information for statistical, training, and trend purposes. At present, there is no accurate manner of capturing this information. Task Force members felt that there was a need to better track use of force incidents. With the AFRs, it should be a task similar to that of domestic violence tracking. The organization can track and monitor the use of force by having one unit act as the central depository for use of force reports. The data from use of force incidents can then be used to validate our training procedures, identify weaknesses in training, and proactively address trends as they develop.

Information Considered

Based on the various use of force policies reviewed and the SDPD policy, which requires proper documentation, no tracking system is offered.

We hope to be able to identify training needs, developing trends, and analysis of use of force cases. With this information, we can develop training and educational opportunities for officers and community members.

Evaluation Criteria

Annual statistical reports can be generated from the data and submitted to the Chief of Police for his review and future recommendations.

Costs

It is estimated that the costs will range from \$50,000.00 to \$100,000.00. This request can be incorporated in the AFR and RMS. The costs for this system should not be a determining factor on moving forward with this recommendation.

Funding

General Fund and Grants

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5

This proposal recommends the addition of 17 canine teams to the Canine Unit. Each area command would have one canine team per shift per watch. This will provide 24/7 coverage by canine units.

Foundation

The primary mission of the canine unit is to serve as an alternative to deadly force. In 1994, an Inspection and Control audit of the Canine Unit cited the use of the Police Service Dogs as a contributing factor to the decrease in the number of officer involved shootings. Since the 1991 expansion of the Canine Unit, the Department has grown to include two additional patrol divisions; however, the Canine Unit has not expanded to meet the Department's need. (See New Program Proposal memo dated February 14, 2000, to Captain Adolfo Gonzales from Sergeants Phelps and Havin of the Canine Unit).

Information Considered

Inspection and Control Report # 93-30, Inspection of Canine Unit; Memorandum dated March 20, 2000, to Lieutenant Chris Ellis from Sergeants Havin and Phelps; Memorandum dated January 7, 2000, to Jerry Ruiz, Building Maintenance from Sergeant Havin; and Memorandum dated May 25, 2000, "Canine Unit satisfaction survey results." The 1990 Officer Safety Task Force and the Grand Jury recommendations have supported the greater use of Police Service Dogs to reduce the levels of violence.

We hope to increase the number of canines available throughout the city, and to provide each Area Command an assigned canine team for each watch assignment. This increased staffing will reduce the response time to critical incidents, which will provide an effective and proven alternative to deadly force. Having more canine teams available in the field will reduce the levels of violence toward officers and the public, and help address the "suicide by cop" phenomenon.

Evaluation Criteria

Each canine sergeant would have two additional officers to supervise and still be able to manage their teams. The existing canine lieutenant should be able to manage the unit.

Daily canine deployment and "dog bite" reports can be reviewed for trends, training needs, and adjustments as needed.

Costs

The start-up cost to increase the Canine Unit by 17 teams is:

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| Purchase of dogs | \$6,500 per dog x 17 dogs | = \$110,500.00 |
| Miscellaneous (kennels, leashes, bowls) | \$1,220.00 x 17 dogs | = \$ 20,740.00 |
| Vehicles | \$24,500.00 x 17 cars | = \$416,500.00 |
| Veterinary check per dog | \$ 120.00 x 17 dogs | = \$ 2,040.00 |
| New Officers | \$128,183.00 x 17 Officers | = \$2,179,111.00 |
| Minimum K-9 overtime per year | \$6,500.00 per officer annually x 17 officers | = \$110,500.00 |
| | Sub-Total | =.. <u>\$2,839,391.00</u> |

Funding

Department Budget.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 6

Allow supervisors to respond to incidents with the large MARC IX, “Pepper Spray”.

Foundation

A reduction of use force by using the large MARC IX instead of other levels of force.

Information Considered

In addition to reviewing the various policies and procedures, we also considered the IACP Executive Brief; Pepper Spray and in-custody deaths” report dated March 1994, and “Modern Warrior” article “The Evolution of OC training.” We also received input from patrol officers and committee members.

Objective

A reduction of use force by using the large MARC IX instead of other levels of force.

Evaluation Criteria

This policy should be reviewed in accordance with established timelines for policy revisions.

Costs

Each unit costs about \$29.96. If we order one MARC IX for each patrol sergeant’s car, that should be about 71 canisters for a total of \$2,127.16.

Funding

Department Budget.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 7

Evaluate SDPD's current defensive tactics curriculum to determine if it can be done better. Although not limited to the following, the evaluation scope should include:

Teaching fighting skills in academy.

Adjust the physical fitness emphasis from extended runs to defensive tactics. The daily physical fitness sessions should include defensive tactic drills.

Add role-play scenarios to defensive tactics as part of learning and testing phases.

Foundation

Police officers that are better trained in these areas will be confident and provide better service to the community. The academy needs to encourage a life style of fitness that prepares officers for physical confrontations. There should be more short speed running drills that end with defensive tactic or ground fighting drills.

The committee contacted POST to determine if there was any research on these options. POST was unable to find any research specific to our concerns.

Information Considered

Academy training curriculum and Group discussion

Objective

Fewer police shootings, better trained police officers.

Evaluation Criteria

Self-evaluation from police officers, tracking of police shootings, tracking of police use of force incidents.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 8

Evaluate issuing pepper ball systems to all police officers.

Foundation

This recommendation provides an option to the use of deadly force.

Information Considered

Group discussion

Objective

Fewer police shootings.

Evaluation Criteria

Tracking of shootings & pepper ball use.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 9

Create the best defensive tactics training in the country taking into consideration the following options:

Develop a permanent defensive tactic training facility, which is staffed similar to the way the firearm range is staffed;

Adopt an annual physical training in defensive tactics with a testing requirement. The curriculum needs to be structured with lesson plans and testing requirements. Training needs to be ongoing throughout the year. Training could be quarterly or by shift. Besides training in defensive tactics, training in mob and riot control needs to be included;

Each command should have their own defensive tactic training equipment - mats, striking bags protective gear;

Each police division should have a full time defensive tactics instructor assigned to coordinate and provide training;

Department should devote 1 hour each workday to defensive tactics training;

The Department should allow officers to work out on duty and require them to pass an annual fitness test.

Foundation

Police officers use defensive tactics more than their firearms. The Department needs to put as much emphasis on and commitment to defensive tactics as firearms. Staffing is critical to this recommendation. Currently, SDPD has no full-time supervisory staff dedicated to defensive tactics. No one is overseeing the Department's defensive tactics interests on a regional basis. This shortcoming needs to be rectified immediately.

Police officers have annual training requirement with firearms, but no annual requirement with defensive tactics or mob and riot tactics. Officers who have continuous training in defensive tactics will be more confident, and in control of themselves and others. A police officer who is well trained in defensive tactics and physically fit will be less likely to over-react, better equipped to handle physical confrontations, healthier, happier and able to provide a better service to the community.

Information Considered

Group discussion

Objective

The best-trained police officer, fewer officers involved shootings.

Evaluation Criteria

Tracking of shootings & force incidents. Self-evaluation by officers.

Cost

To be determined It is our understanding that a permanent defensive tactic site is being constructed at this time at Camp Nimitz.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 10

Give officers discretion on how to apply handcuffs to a compliant person. Officers will be able to apply handcuffs with the suspect's hands to the rear with either the palms together or the back of the hands together.

Prior to transporting a compliant suspect, officers will transition from handcuffs to waist chain cuffs. Issue all patrol officers and sergeants waist chain cuffs.

Foundation

Many complaints are generated when handcuffs are applied. This change may lessen those complaints by allowing officers to use more comfortable restraint procedures when dealing with compliant persons.

Information Considered

Internal affairs request and Group discussion

Objective

To have fewer handcuff complaints.

Evaluation Criteria

Fewer handcuff complaints over the fiscal year.

Cost

We could not get an exact price for the waist chain cuffs. An approximate cost is \$70 per unit. All patrol officers would need the equipment, so start-up costs would be in the area of \$70,000.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

There was considerable discussion regarding the safety to officers this recommendation might imply. Officers apply handcuffs to non-compliant persons any way they can. They usually do not consider whether the suspect's hands are palms together or not. We are more restrictive in our application of handcuffs to people who are compliant, which is a considerable source of complaint. There is a feeling among the officers on this committee that many officers are already

handcuffing compliant suspect with their palms together in violation of our Department's procedures.

During review at the Oversight Committee, several members felt giving the officers the discretion to handcuff palms together would open the officers up to complacency and possible injury.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 11

Create the best training in carotid restraint in the country. Options to consider:

Find out why the current carotid technique is not being used more effectively in the field.

Change primary entry position for neck restraint technique from standing to putting the suspect in a sitting position through a takedown technique. The actual application of the carotid restraint technique would be from the suspect's rear while sitting on the ground.

Evaluate other carotid techniques.

Provide regular training with the carotid restraint. Officers are reluctant to use this technique because they do not practice. Each command needs an assigned carotid restraint instructor, responsible for bi-monthly training on the carotid techniques.

Foundation

It is safer to apply the carotid restraint technique from the described ground position versus standing. Regular training with the technique will insure a more confident officer in the field and safer application of the restraint technique.

Information Considered

Group discussion

Objective

To improve application of technique.

Evaluation Criteria

Successful use of technique. Tracking of carotid restraint use.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Some felt we should review current technique and compare with other techniques to see if they are easier to use from all entry positions.

Some felt training on the carotid restraint needs to be more often than bi-monthly. Several people felt the training should be monthly to insure proper application of the technique.

There are no statistics or Department studies on carotid usage. How often is it used? Is it effective? What carotid techniques do officers need?

LAPD's study on physical confrontations shows most confrontations end on the ground. Is our standing technique compatible with that statistic?

During review by the Department's Use of Force Committee, the proposed ground entry position was clarified.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 12

Drug test police officers involved in shootings that result in an injury or death.

Foundation

Police shootings are highly controversial. By testing officers involved, the department will be taking steps to allay public concerns about the officer's state of intoxication.

Information Considered

Group discussion

Objective

To demonstrate to public the integrity of the Department and officers.

Evaluation Criteria

Test results.

Cost

Approximate cost of \$100 per shooting.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Some on committee felt testing was not needed due to the department's current random drug test program. The officers on the committee felt that submitting to this test after a shooting is degrading and unnecessary.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 13

Implement more Firearms Training Simulation (F.A.T.S.) with emphasis on other force options.

Foundation

This recommendation is intended to increase training of non-lethal force options.

Information Considered

Group discussion

Objective

Give officers ability and training to think critically in highly stressful situations.

Evaluation Criteria

Tracking of shootings incidents and use of force incidents.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 14

Department should issue either a collapsible side-handle or a collapsible straight baton to all officers in addition to the nunchakus and solid side-handle baton. Under this recommendation, officers would choose between a collapsible side-handle or a collapsible straight baton.

Foundation

Officers are allowed to carry optional impact weapons that they purchase. More and more officers are opting to carry their own collapsible baton. This would make it the Department's responsibility for that purchase.

Information Considered

Group discussion The Department currently requires all officers to have their solid side-handle baton available for mob/riot situations. This recommendation will not change this requirement.

Objective

To defray costs to officers.

To give the officers another impact weapon option that they are comfortable and proficient using.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

Approximate cost of \$60 per unit multiplied by # of officers issued to.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 15

Provide tuition reimbursement for courses/classes in defensive tactics, stress management and communication that are outside the normal traditional educational track.

Increase tuition reimbursement to cover at least 75% of all costs for traditional college courses which are part of a degree program.

Foundation

Police officers who are better trained in these areas will be confident and provide better service to the community. There are many businesses that pay the entire college cost for their employees (i.e. Pacific Bell). Currently, the Department is having difficulty recruiting applicants. Providing better tuition reimbursement incentives may assist with recruiting efforts.

Information Considered

Group discussion.

Community members felt the City should provide this benefit exclusively to public safety employees of the City who by nature of their jobs risk their lives.

Objective

Fewer police shootings, better trained police officers.

Evaluation Criteria

Self-evaluation from police officers, tracking of police shootings, tracking of police use of force incidents.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 16

Evaluate how the Department investigates and holds officers accountable for items missed during searches.

Foundation

The Task Force has found that officers are possibly not held accountable for items left on prisoners and in police cars. The recommendation seeks to address the possible breakdown between finding contraband and/or weapons missed during a search and the discipline rendered in those cases thereby increasing safety.

Information Considered

Group discussion

Objective

Instill discipline to ensure that police officers do thorough searches.

Evaluation Criteria

Track contraband and weapons left on prisoners and found in vehicles.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 17

Adopt the revised version of Department Policy 1.05 “Firearms Procedures” policy, attached hereto as Tab D.

Foundation

First, several changes have been made to Department Procedure 1.05. The revised changes reflect the Department’s Vision, Values, and Mission Statement, specifically addressing the value of human life and respect of others by incorporating the Department’s Vision, Value and Mission into the background section of procedure.

Second, revisions to Section II, A through D and F were modified to clarify the conditions under which an officer may discharge their firearms.

Third, Section VII was revised to make sure officers involved in shootings are isolated from each other to ensure that there is no inappropriate conduct or the appearance of inappropriate conduct.

Information Considered

Department Procedure 1.05.

Other police agencies’ force policies, including Fresno, San Francisco, Oakland and Philadelphia.

Objective

Citizens and police personnel reviewing Department Policy 1.05 and realizing the importance the department places on valuing life and respecting others. The Department’s Visions, Values and Mission statement are reinforced throughout force related policies. The clarifications to the policy also provide better guidance on firearms handling and seek to eliminate circumstances where the appearance of impropriety is possible.

Evaluation Criteria

Feedback from members of the public and police personnel.

Cost

None

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 18

Adopt the revised version of Department Policy 1.36 “Use of Specialty Munitions” policy, attached hereto as Tab E.

Foundation

The recommended changes provide additional guidelines for the safe operation of grenades and pyrotechnic devices, particularly focusing on fire hazards that stem from such deployment.

Information Considered

Department Procedure 1.36
Past SWAT incidents across the nation.

Objective

To make sure that fire hazards are considered before deploying grenades and pyrotechnic devices.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation of SWAT incidents.

Cost

Soft cost.

Funding

Current budget.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 19

Consider moving “deadly force language” contained in Department Procedure 1.05 into Department Procedure 1.04.

Foundation

This recommendation simply places the “deadly force” policy within the Department Procedure dealing with force options.

Information Considered

Department Procedure 1.04 and 1.05.

Objective

Increase knowledge and understanding of use of force options.

Evaluation Criteria

Feedback from members of the public and police personnel.

Cost

Soft cost.

Funding

Current Budget

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 20

Adopt the revised version of Department Procedure 1.03, "Pursuit Procedures," attached hereto as Tab F.

Foundation

The changes to Department Procedure 1.03 stem from the following concerns:

A review of actual supervisory involvement during pursuits raised the concern that more supervision should be encouraged during pursuits. The purpose of this policy change is to further involve supervisors in the active supervision of ongoing pursuits. Supervisors should be encouraged and required to be in the proximity of the pursuit to further enhance their ability to manage the situation effectively. This policy provides that supervisors must "head in the direction" of the pursuit upon its initiation. It also provides that supervisors should continually request information necessary to effectively supervise the pursuit.

Currently, the policy language regarding cover unit pursuit procedures is unclear. This recommended change makes it clear that only one cover unit is authorized in a pursuit unless a supervisor authorizes additional cover units. It also makes it clear that every authorized cover unit must comply with California Vehicle Code sections 21055 and 21056.

Presently, pursuits are videotaped by Airborne Law Enforcement (ABLE) when possible. The Task Force feels it would be beneficial for supervision and safety purposes to compel videotaping of pursuits, whenever possible.

Presently officers are absolutely prohibited from using any legal invention (such as ramming) when driving their vehicles. This recommendation seeks to give officers discretion, in limited circumstances, when legal intervention may be necessary to protect against the threat to life.

Currently, Department procedures are unclear as to whether "bottoming out" is considered a traffic collision. This recommended policy change seeks to clarify this issue.

Information Considered

The sworn police experts that are members of this committee have provided this information based on their current knowledge.

Objective

The recommended changes seek to accomplish the following objectives:

To further enhance supervisory oversight of pursuits, thereby making supervisors more accountable, and pursuits safer and more effective.

To provide absolute clarity to Department members regarding cover unit requirements.

To assure that Department members are adhering to pursuit procedures by making them aware that their actions and/or decisions are being closely monitored and documented.

To allow officers to use discretion, while exercising extreme caution and giving serious thought, to stopping a driver who poses a serious risk to the public by using “legal intervention” measures.

To reinforce defensive driving techniques and the avoidance, if possible, of vehicle damage. Also, to make it clear to all Department personnel that “bottomed out” damage is considered collision damage by the Department, requiring proper reporting and documentation.

Evaluation Criteria

Officer and supervisory input as to the increased level of safety and operational accountability.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 21

Adopt the revised version of Department Policy 1.13 “Emergency Vehicle Operation” policy, attached hereto as Tab G.

Foundation

There was a general sense from committee members that there is presently some confusion stemming from the similarity in “cover now” and “request for cover” codes. This modification clarifies that confusion and reflects the practice that is presently used by officers in the field. The remaining modifications to the section are intended to make the section generally easier to read and understand.

Another modification to Section III(c)(1) changes the word “should” to “shall” when addressing officers exercising caution when driving through intersections in a Code 3 mode.

Information Considered

The sworn police experts that are members of this committee have provided this information based on their current knowledge.

Objective

This modification clarifies that confusion and reflects the practice that is presently used by some officers in the field. The remaining modifications to the section are intended to make the section generally easier to read and understand.

Evaluation Criteria

Officer and supervisory input as to the increased level of safety and operational accountability.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 22

It should be the policy of the San Diego Police Department that violations of traffic laws by members without justification will not be tolerated.

All supervisors are expected to address violations of the policy with appropriate corrective action, up to and including discipline.

For this policy to be effective, it must be a priority of every supervisor, from the Chief to line level (sergeant).

If this policy is implemented, the Chief should address the policy in a Department wide order.

Foundation

Primarily, this recommendation is out of fairness to the officer. It sets the tone that we want our officers to obey all traffic laws when there is no justified reason to violate them. This should ensure that it will be no surprise to Department members when the Department takes a stronger stance against a very serious traffic violation that was committed (i.e., violation of pursuit policies, Code 3 policies, etc.). This posture will send a message to all Department members that we are concerned about all their driving techniques and obedience to traffic laws, not just when something serious occurs.

Secondarily, the community sometimes feels that officers take advantage of their authority and, when not necessary, park the way “they want to”, disregarding laws. This leaves a negative perception with community members, who would be cited for making the same violation.

Information Considered

We had a long discussion within our committee about known “poor driving practices.”

Objective

Heightened awareness to improve driving techniques, under all situations, to Department members.

Evaluation Criteria

The implementation of this recommendation might be hard to evaluate for either success or failure. There might be a reduction in traffic accidents as a result, however it's not likely. This recommendation is primarily out of need to establish a posture in the organization about the seriousness of driving tactics and practices.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 23

Provide a more suitable Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) for Department personnel to train on.

Foundation

The San Diego Regional Training Center (Academy and In-service Training) currently trains on an old and very limited EVOC Course. It is almost impossible to accelerate to high speeds and maintain those speeds to learn defensive driving skills and tactics. The current course also does not allow the Department to expand or consider state-of-the-art training on new tactics that the Department might feel fit to authorize (i.e. the PIT maneuver (Pursuit Intervention Tactic)).

Information Considered

Regional Training Staff, instructors for Vehicle Operations.

Objective

Provide a better training environment for law enforcement personnel so that they are able to train adequately and safely.

Evaluation Criteria

Success can be evaluated by a reduction in accidents associated with high speed driving. Also, surveying officers with regard to their confidence levels when driving under pursuit or high-speed conditions (if they are better trained, then they should have a higher level of confidence in their abilities). Also, people will do what they are trained to do, especially under stressful conditions.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 24

Increase “in-service” time for police helicopters.

Foundation

During a pursuit, police helicopters are invaluable i.e. maintaining a visual on the pursuit, particularly if the pursuit is terminated or officers lose the suspect vehicle. The helicopters also have the equipment to video record the pursuit, thereby encouraging officers to act within policy. The video could also be used to further critique and provide training on pursuit tactics, etc.

Information Considered

According to officers and supervisors, many times the police helicopter is not available for use in a pursuit. This is primarily due to their lack of “round-the-clock” coverage stemming from insufficient number of air ships.

Objective

Increase the availability of air support in pursuits to the ground units. Air support can provide increased visibility and a safer tracking of the suspect vehicle.

Evaluation Criteria

Increased incident involvements by Air Support in police pursuits.

Cost

To be determined It is highly probable there would be an increase in the number of helicopters, pilots and associated budget.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 25

Expedite replacement of the new light bars for police vehicles.

Institute a definitive “life cycle” calendar for light bars.

Foundation

The replacement of new light bars is slow, thereby prohibiting the full fleet from being equipped with the new light bar as soon as possible. This light bar provides much more visibility and would be a much safer piece of equipment for citizens and officers.

The Department has no “life cycle” criteria on light bars. This prevents the Department from replacing old, outdated equipment, thereby having to maintain equipment that is both hard to find parts and is not as effective.

Information Considered

Fleet Management Division

Approximately 160 vehicles still need to be outfitted with the new light bar.

Objective

To get this important piece of safety equipment installed in all vehicles as soon as possible.

Evaluation Criteria

Earlier completion will measure the success.

Cost

It will cost approximately \$134,500 to complete the installation of new light bars on 160 police vehicles.

The cost to establishing a “life cycle” replacement of light bar is to be determined.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 26

Install new sirens that are of a higher decibel level on police vehicles.

Institute a “life cycle” replacement calendar for sirens.

Foundation

Many of the current vehicle sirens are extremely old and outdated. Sirens with a higher decibel level are more audible, thereby increasing public safety.

The Department’s current “life cycle” for replacement on sirens is approximately 10 years. This is far too long and does not allow for newer advanced systems to be installed that are more advantageous to the safety of citizens and officers.

Information Considered

Field police officers and Fleet Management Division

Objective

Increased audio level on vehicle sirens and to assure there is an appropriate replacement cycle to keep current with effective and safer equipment.

Evaluation Criteria

Feedback from citizens and officers. Perhaps police-related accidents can tell us whether there is a decrease as a result of better sirens.

Cost

The approximate cost of a siren and associated equipment (i.e. speakers) is \$150. This would have to be multiplied by the Department’s fleet size.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 27

Continue long-term research, support, and implementation of new technology such as Video Teleconferencing and Video Downlinks (live feed).

Foundation

Video Teleconferencing and Video Downlinks can provide real-time information to officers, supervisors, and managers during major incidents such as police pursuits, critical incidents, and natural disasters. This technology allows participants to make better-educated decisions based upon the latest information available. This improves officer and public safety, while providing the most efficient and effective service possible.

Information Considered

SDPD New Technologies Unit

CAL TRANS Traffic Management Center

City of San Diego Traffic Management Center

Objective

To provide department members with the latest, state of the art video teleconferencing and downlink capabilities available so they may operate safely and efficiently during critical incidents and pursuits.

Evaluation Criteria

Once the system is in place, a one year evaluation period should be utilized to measure reductions in police equipment collisions, injuries to officers and citizens, lost time due to industrial leave, and costs associated with overtime as the result of an extended incident.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Members agreed upon the value of video support to assist members with decision-making during incident management, including police pursuits. Cost factors and developing partnerships with

agencies such as CAL TRANS and the City's Traffic Engineering Department will be considerable challenges for this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 28

Develop policy and training to implement the use of the Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT maneuver) to terminate police pursuits.

Foundation

The use of the PIT maneuver will provide specifically trained field officers with an additional pursuit management tool to safely discontinue pursuits under certain traffic conditions. The PIT maneuver, when used by properly trained officers, reduces and/or eliminates the threat of an ongoing pursuit by disabling the suspect vehicle in a controlled environment. Utilized at speeds of 35mph or less, the PIT maneuver improves officer and public safety by removing the threat of pursuit as quickly and safely as possible.

Information Considered

California Highway Patrol - Emergency Vehicle Operations Center

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department - Emergency Vehicle Operations Center (POST Training Center for PIT)

SDPD Automotive Fleet Manager

SDPD Traffic Division Fleet Safety Sergeant

Objective

To provide department members with the best pursuit management tactics and tools available to safely reduce and/or eliminate the hazards of police pursuits and their impact on the community.

Evaluation Criteria

Once the policy, training and equipment are in place, a one year evaluation period should be utilized to measure reductions in police equipment collisions*, injuries to officers and citizens, lost time due to industrial leave, and costs associated with overtime as the result of an extended incident. The evaluation should include how many pursuits were safely concluded by the use of the PIT maneuver and how many suspects were successfully apprehended.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Members unanimously agreed upon the value of the PIT maneuver as a valuable resource to field officers during pursuits. Much like the use of tire deflation devices like the Spike Strips, the use of the PIT maneuver is not the cure all to reducing or eliminating police pursuits. It does offer officers an additional tool to use in situations where legal intervention is legal and justified.

**The PIT maneuver is considered a form of legal intervention and, as such, damage occurring as a result of this intervention is not considered a police equipment collision.*

RECOMMENDATION NO. 29

It is recommended that the Department establish a consistent and on-going training curriculum for pursuit driving and emergency vehicle operation. The curriculum should be delivered to all sworn Department members and conducted, at a minimum, yearly.

Foundation

Currently, sworn personnel receive very little updated/ongoing training as it relates to pursuit and emergency driving. Once training is delivered at the recruit level in the Academy, very few training opportunities are provided to officers on a consistent and regular basis. Pursuit and emergency driving requires the application of physical skills in conjunction with decision-making abilities. Practical skills can only be kept current if they are practiced and trained on a regular basis. In addition, very little opportunity exists that provide on-going and consistent refresher training as it relates to policies and procedures involving pursuit and emergency vehicle driving.

Most practical application skills are considered “perishable” if not frequently trained and refreshed on. Defensive and pursuit driving are such skills.

Information Considered

The sworn police experts that are members of this committee have provided this information based on their current knowledge.

Objective

This training would make sworn members more experienced, comfortable and confident with their knowledge and handling of pursuit and emergency driving. We also believe that there would be more accountability on the part of officers, supervisors and managers with respect to closely following policies. Additionally, this training program should immensely enhance the Department’s edge in the area of tactical procedures relative to high risk driving situations.

Finally, such training should enhance the safety of officers and the community they police.

Evaluation Criteria

Success can be measured by a reduction in problematic pursuit or emergency vehicle incidents.

Cost

If the training can be incorporated into the yearly ROT (Regional Officer Training) program, then the costs would be minimal. However, if an additional training program would have to be established, then the costs are yet To be determined

Funding

Department Budget

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 30

The Task Force recommends that the Department research and evaluate the use of Global Position Satellite Systems (GPS).

Foundation

The GPS systems in patrol vehicles provide several significant options that will greatly benefit the officers, supervisors and management of a police agency.

Currently, the only pieces of equipment available to officers that will alert others of their critical need for help are the vehicle and portable radios. The portable radio has an Emergency Button that, when activated, will identify the officer assigned to that piece of equipment is in need of immediate assistance. The scenario most likely to play out in this incident would be a case where the officer did not have an opportunity to request assistance through the normal use of his/her radios. This system, however, only alerts the need for assistance. It does not provide the location of the officer.

A GPS system in vehicles would allow immediate and “near real time” tracking of the vehicle’s position. In many cases, an officer will either be in or in the near vicinity of their police vehicle. If an officer were unable to notify communications of his/her location for help, the pinpoint location of the vehicle by the GPS Tracking system would provide that information. Additional units could be sent to the location of the officer’s vehicle. If the officer is not found by the vehicle, this would allow for a starting point to begin a grid search for the officer. Police officer lives can be saved with the use of this system.

In addition to the officer safety feature, the GPS system would also provide critical information for tactical and management use. The system would allow for a detailed picture of where all available units are by Service Area, by Command or within the City. When built into the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system, the location of all units could be shown in relation to the dispatched calls for service.

The system would also benefit supervision in the management of the number of cars responding to incidents. For example, a supervisor can easily see how many units might be in a pursuit, or responding to a radio call, etc.

Information Considered

The committee discussed available features of the GPS systems currently on the market. In addition, the committee talked with representatives from the California Highway Patrol who use the GPS system in one of their local Field Divisions. A representative from the San Diego Sheriff’s Department presented information on their current use of GPS in all patrol vehicles.

Objective

Precise tracking of all patrol assigned vehicles. This capability would provide a higher level of officer safety and an enhancement of management data that can be used by supervisors for accountability and more efficient and effective operations.

Evaluation Criteria

Officer and supervisory input as to the increased level of safety and operational accountability.

Cost

The cost would need to be evaluated and researched by persons in the organization that would best be able to determine system needs, project outlay costs, contract requirements, etc. Appropriate Department experts (Communications, New Technology) would have to determine costs as they relate to the GPS system's association/configuration with our current communications systems.

Funding

Plan to incorporate funding into future Department's operating budget or identifiable grants.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

The President of the San Diego Police Officer's Association was present when the GPS system was discussed. He thought that the officer safety capabilities were a very positive feature. However, he also stated that some officers might look at the system as a "big brother" tool and resent it.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 31

A comprehensive review should be made of all past internal and external reviews of SDPD processes, to determine the present status of those recommendations. Special attention should be paid to recurring recommendations.

Foundation

A partial analysis of available past reviews suggests that certain recommendations consistently recur. The Task Force does not know if the reason for this recurrence is a failure or inability to act, or a periodic need for re-emphasis. We feel there is value in knowing the answer. The Task Force is concerned that the SDPD does not have a completely documented record of past reviews and would urge the SDPD to take all necessary steps to create such a record.

Information Considered

Available past reviews

Objective

To determine and track past recommendations to maximize lessons-learned and insure that recommendations are acted upon.

Evaluation Criteria

Conduct a progress review in six months.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 32

Conduct continual evaluation of training curriculum to insure that the content is relevant to SDPD training objectives, and that the time allotted to each subject is proportional to its importance and the frequency of its application.

Foundation

Auditing of select SDPD Academy classes revealed that, in some instances, the time allotted for instruction was excessive and could have been better allocated to other purposes. There are certain areas of instruction that cover low frequency skills, such as first aid, while other areas cover core subjects, such as weapons training, role-playing, use of force. The key is to analyze the entire curriculum and relegate time appropriately.

Information Considered

Selected review of the Academy curriculum, attendance at classes, and interviews with police officers.

Objective

More efficient use of time. Allocation of time to core areas.

Evaluation Criteria

This is a continuing process. Success will be measured by officer performance in the field.

Cost

No additional cost burden is anticipated.

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

May require review and modification of P.O.S.T. standards.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 33

Establish consistent and appropriate physical fitness requirements for all members of the SDPD.

Foundation

Individual professionalism, performance, and health are promoted by the maintenance of appropriate and consistent physical fitness standards. Further, a fit appearance contributes to overall morale, a command presence better able to mitigate incident escalation, and sets a positive example for the community.

Information Considered

Many recruits leave the Academy in the best physical condition of their lives. The Task Force has observed that for a significant number of officers, there is a marked deterioration of that status thereafter.

Objective

Healthier and fitter officers, better able to perform their duties. Possible reduction in officer injuries.

Evaluation Criteria

Establish periodic evaluations. Make appearance and physical fitness an element of performance evaluations and advancement.

Cost

Negligible. Fitness facilities are already in place in SDPD stations.

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Fitness standards may need to be adjusted for age.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 34

Establish periodic, random evaluations of officers to determine and track their stress levels, areas of potential stress, bias, and coping skills.

Foundation

Law enforcement is a unique pursuit with unique levels of stress and other psychological pressures. The safety of the officer and the public he/she serves is paramount.

Information Considered

Academy presentations on use of force, cultural and ethnic diversity, and the pressures of the real world.

Objectives

Detect potentially dangerous levels of stress/bias/attitudes, or inadequate coping skills.

Evaluation Criteria

Monitor morale, seek feedback from officers, and track instances of officer related stress.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

There may be POA concerns and confidentiality considerations. There also may be labor relations considerations if these are used as job-retention criteria.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 35

Determine if there are existing mechanisms for storing, monitoring, analyzing, and providing real time information concerning citizen complaints and, if not in place, establish such a system.

Foundation

In order to maximize the credibility of the SDPD, there needs to be a computerized, readily accessible data base of citizen complaints, cross-referenced by all appropriate criteria, including name, ethnicity, community, of alleged victim and officer(s) involved, nature of resolution, etc.

Information Considered

The Department provided briefings on the citizen complaint process. To the knowledge of the Task Force, there is presently no such database in existence.

Objective

Quicker identification of trends regarding complaints, complainants, and officer conduct.

Evaluation Criteria

The content and accessibility of the system will be its measure.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 36

Provide training for officers and recruits in customer-oriented communications, “people” skills, to assist them in treating community members with dignity and respect. Utilize both classroom and role-playing environments to develop and improve these processes. Periodic refreshers may be required.

Foundation

The ability to communicate with confidence, comfort, and appropriate sensitivity, can be a major factor in reducing potentially stressful or dangerous situations. Control can be maintained through respect.

Information Considered

Personal experience of Task Force members. Observations of Academy training.

Objective

Fewer confrontations initiated by SDPD officers who do not understand the need to treat all community members, whenever circumstances permit, with dignity and respect.

Evaluation Criteria

Supervisors observe officers in their communications and contacts with citizens.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 37

Provide stress management/education resources. Consider implementing periodic voluntary training/workshop sessions to educate and discuss stress related topics. In addition, have a “stress-issues” box on display in each department (similar to suggestion boxes) in order to identify topics/collect ideas that should be presented in workgroups, seminars, or videos.

Foundation

Stress is a constant presence in the lives of many officers. The Task Force recommends that processes be put in place, either on an individual and/or group basis to provide education and opportunity for discussions. The Task Force also feels there should be an anonymous process by which officers can identify stressors and make suggestions.

Information Considered

Task Force experience. Discussions with police officers and supervisors.

Objective

To explore creative and effective tools to identify and reduce stress.

Evaluation Criteria

Gather information from the customers, the police officers, to determine if they feel the process is helpful.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 38

Implement an anonymous Peer Counseling telephone hot-line system. A select and trained cadre of volunteer veteran officers, perhaps retired, are best suited to take calls from s current police officers.

Foundation

This creates a telephonic mentoring and stress management tool for officers to speak to individuals who share a common experience. Anonymity and confidentiality must be maintained.

Information Considered

Discussions with serving and retired officers. Presentations by SDPD psychologists.

Objective

To provide officers with a readily available, non-attribution, venting and mentoring process.

Evaluation Criteria

Ask the participants.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 39

Similar to the Chicano Federation Leadership Institute, implement a required Academy multicultural studies segment that dedicates 2 weeks of cultural instruction/and interaction for each of the predominant ethnic groups in San Diego on a biweekly basis.

Additionally, provide similar community participation for veteran officers.

Foundation

At the present time, police recruits receive limited classroom instruction on diversity and cultural variety, but nearly no actual exposure. This is inadequate preparation. Further, veteran officers have no opportunity to spend an extended amount of time participating in public benefit organizations.

Information Considered

Discussions with officers. Observed Chicano Federation Program.

Objective

Rather than presenting a “general” overview of the various groups and offering the courses at intervals, the recommendation above will at least give the officers and a community a “fair” opportunity to respect each others’ role and to justify or negate the perception of “biases” and “racism.”

Evaluation Criteria

Gather input from officers after a two-year period of service to determine if the information/experience was helpful. Also gather communication reactions.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 40

Contract with an independent entity to develop and conduct racial and cultural sensitivity training at the Academy. A mix of outside and inside the agency trainers may also meet the objective. The key is objectivity and thoroughness.

Foundation

Task Force members have attended Academy classes and witnessed instructor's well-intentioned efforts to sensitize officers to a variety of diversity issues. In order to enhance the credibility and objective nature of such instruction, the Task Force members believe an outside contractor should augment this "in house" effort.

Information Considered

Observation of Academy training. Task Force member's life experience.

Objective

To provide recruits with the best possible sensitivity training.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Since the Academy is a separate, state-certified entity; changes and additions would be needed at the state level. However, in-service, "in-house" training does not have these restrictions, this instruction could be introduced post Academy without P.O.S.T. review.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 41

Include SDPD policies concerning racial profiling as an element of recruiting, hiring and training.

Foundation

Racial profiling is unconstitutional and wrong. SDPD Officers need to be clear on this principle.

Information Considered

SDPD Academy review. Review of Chief Bejarano's Traffic Stop Study.

Objective

To insure that racial profiling is not part of SDPD procedures.

Evaluation Criteria

Periodic review of Traffic Stop Studies, solicitation of community response.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 42

Infuse throughout the entire SDPD two fundamental tenets, that: (a) police officers and civilians are partners, and mutually dependent on each other for their safety and success (“we are in this together” vice “us and them”); (b) each police officer to be responsible to the community, he/she must be responsible to themselves.

Foundation

The instruction emphasizes the recruits’ responsibility to the community, but not responsibility to themselves. Without the former, there cannot be the latter. The classes also fail to focus on the partnership that must exist between police officers and civilians to maximize public safety; a police officer and civilian’s survival depend on that partnership.

Information Considered

Attendance at SDPD Academy classes

Objective

To build a police department focused on the community.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 43

Continue Chief Bejarano's Vehicle Stop Program as a regular process. Expand this model across the entire spectrum of police contacts. Consider additional criteria, including the ethnicity and gender of the officer(s) involved.

Foundation

This suggestion compliments the prior recommendation that racial profiling training be included in SDPD Academy curriculum.

Information Considered

Traffic Stop Program.

Objective

It is important to continually monitor the potential for racial profiling.

Evaluation Criteria

The resultant data will provide the evaluation.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 44

Introduce mediation training into the SDPD Academy and Regional Officers Training curriculum. Recommended text: Mediation and Arbitration by Portal Officers, Christopher Cooper, University Press of America, Inc., 1999.

Foundation

Mediation training can improve officers' dispute resolution and interpersonal skills and show them how their attitudes and behavior influence the actions of others.

Information Considered

Existing SDPD dispute resolution processes; recommended text; conversations with Commander Regina McDonald, Pittsburgh Police Department.

Objective

Better dispute management and interpersonal skills to assist in preventing incidents from escalating.

Evaluation Criteria

Assessment of dispute resolutions.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 45

Provide a voluntary, alternative to resolve citizen complaints against police officers. Recommend a process that provides, at intake, a diversionary mechanism that does not replace or eliminate a citizen's right to pursue a formal complaint process, but facilitates a referral to civilian mediation contractor.

Foundation

Present process refers citizen complaints directly to Internal Affairs and provides no opportunity for an informal resolution between the complainant and the officer.

Information Considered

Existing citizen complaint process.

Objective

To provide face-to-face resolution of lesser complaints.

Evaluation Criteria

Recommend evaluation of effectiveness by both officers and complainants.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 46

Confidential professional assistance for stress-related problems, such as stress management and “impaired” officer programs, especially for line officers.

Foundation

Work-related stress is a major contributor to a deterioration of officer performance.

Information Considered

Conversations with police officers and instructors.

Objective

To provide comprehensive and accessible stress management, education, and relief.

Evaluation Criteria

Officer input. Retention statistics.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 47

THE CHIEF OF POLICE MUST DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT TO, AND SET THE TONE FOR, ANY EFFECTIVE CHANGE, PARTICULARLY OFFICER ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE PUBLIC. THERE MUST BE BUY-IN THROUGHOUT THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.

FOUNDATION

WITHOUT STRONG, POSITIVE LEADERSHIP AND A COMMITMENT FROM WITHIN THE SDPD TO CHANGE, CHANGE CANNOT OCCUR.

INFORMATION CONSIDERED

SDPD ORGANIZATION. PAST SUCCESS AND FAILURE WITH PROPOSED CHANGES. COMMITTEE EXPERIENCE.

OBJECTIVE

COMPLETE ALIGNMENT OF ATTITUDE WITHIN THE SDPD TO THE WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE DEPARTMENT.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

THE QUALITY OF CHANGE WILL BE THE TEST.

COST

NONE

FUNDING

NONE

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND/OR OPPOSING VIEWS

NONE

RECOMMENDATION NO. 48

Refine training processes to focus on the relationships between control and containment, restraint and patience, in dealing with threat situations, and provide officers with the tools and knowledge to utilize all available tools as precursor, if appropriate, to the application of deadly force.

Foundation

Present training syllabus stresses maintaining absolute control as an officer's primary goal in his/her encounters with the public. This priority of control tends to overshadow other alternatives, such as containment and the application of restraint, patience and giving situations the opportunity to de-escalate. As a result, some officers are left with the impression that they must act aggressively rather than observing and containing a situation as long as they are not directly threatened with harm.

Information Considered

Committee experience; interviews with officers/former SDPD Police Chiefs.

Objective

To develop within officers the understanding that control can be achieved through different levels of containment. That flexibility and adaptability in a tactical situation better serves the public and the safety of the officer.

Evaluation Criteria

Long-term observation of situations resolved without use of deadly force.

Cost

None

Funding

None required.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 49

Establish training in the principles of equity and fairness, and the importance of infusing them in all aspects of policing, and include practical and proven methods, such as role-playing, in developing and testing judgment. Essential instincts of effective police work should be identified and strengthened through this same training.

Foundation

Recruits should not be graduated from the Academy, and serving police officers should not be permitted continued service, unless they periodically demonstrate their understanding of fundamental values of fairness and equity and an ability to exercise proper judgment in all aspects of police work, especially use of force.

Information Considered

Military training curricula, other PD training processes, Committee member experience.

Objective

To develop police officers with the special skills necessary to perform their duties and serve the public.

Evaluation Criteria

Through use of existing role playing processes, peer and supervisory evaluation and, if required, testing.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 50

Training in use of force, and the force continuum, must stress that each application of force is unique to particular situations and not a substitute for another.

Foundation

The use of communication skills or other non-lethal means are not substitutes for deadly force. Each has a function.

Information Considered

Ride Alongs; Conversations with officers, interviews with former SDPD Chiefs of Police.

Objectives

Eliminate confusion. Provide confidence and comfort with the use of the force continuum.

Evaluation Criteria

Gather response from officers.

Cost

None

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views:

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 51

The City Manager of San Diego, as requested by the Chief of Police, initiate a study with the San Diego Unified School District to determine what educational process can be developed and implemented to provide a continuing education process for students to educate them on the role of the police department and their responsibilities if contacted by law enforcement.

Foundation

Lack of understanding by citizens regarding their responsibilities relating to law enforcement and the role and responsibilities of the police department can create unnecessary and potentially dangerous situations.

Information Considered

Ride-alongs; Committee experience; interviews with officers.

Objectives

To make encounters with law enforcement safe for citizens and police officers.

Evaluation Criteria

Periodic citizen surveys to assess impact.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 52

Integrate Sgt. Dennis Johnson's customer-oriented approach to police procedures throughout the entire SDPD training spectrum. This may include a specific class exclusively devoted to this process.

Foundation

The number one source of citizen complaints is directed at officers who do not treat the people they encounter with dignity and respect and/or fail to provide adequate information concerning the reason for the encounter. Some officers confuse professionalism with cold formality. Throughout an encounter, unless circumstances such as officer safety or an ongoing investigation render the approach infeasible, officers should deal with the public in a pleasant, informative fashion. To do otherwise is to court a like response and unnecessarily escalate situations.

Information Considered

Discussion with officers and the public. Committee experience.

Objective

To make a positive, friendly attitude the hallmark of the SDPD.

Evaluation Criteria

Take random citizen reactions after encounters with SDPD.

Cost

None

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 53

Conduct continual review of the quality of class content and instructors in all SDPD training processes.

Foundation

Audit of select classes by Task Force members revealed a spectrum of instructors and classes ranging from barely adequate to exceptional. The core areas of leadership, community responsibility, customer relations are often the most difficult to teach and should be provided instructors capable of obtaining and holding the classes attention.

Further, some instructors, particularly the civilians, had difficulty in maintaining class discipline. Instances of skylarking, sleeping, and general inattention were noted.

Information Considered

Audited classes.

Objective

To provide SDPD Police recruits and officers with quality training.

Evaluation Criteria

Grade instructors and instruction.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 54

Develop private/public sector partnerships, or other means, to provide low interest mortgages, subsidized rents, or other incentives to encourage police officers to live in their Division neighborhoods. Consider voluntary assignment extensions to capture the resident police officer's corporate knowledge.

Foundation

Encouraging officers, through various incentives, to reside in their patrol areas is a growing trend and can be found with both domestic and foreign law enforcement agencies. A measurable reduction in crime results from this program.

Information Considered

Kennedy School of Government studies on community policing and research into foreign police departments.

Objective

Strengthened community connection with law enforcement. Preservation of corporate knowledge and personal identification with the community.

Evaluation Criteria

Record and analyze crime statistics before and after police officer residency established.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

Private/public investment and grants.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 55

Establish a formal/informal dialogue with the leadership and the citizens of San Diego to capture what San Diego wants its police department to be and then use that dialogue to refine that vision.

Foundation

Participation by the community in forging its police department engenders a sense of ownership and establishes a mutual responsibility between the community and law enforcement.

Information Considered

Task Force experience. Conversations with community members.

Objective

A police department that reflects the needs of the community.

Evaluation Criteria

No formal process required.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views.

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 56

Initiate a formal mentoring program throughout the department. New officers should be assigned to a veteran officer of established excellence for the first two years of patrol duty.

Foundation

The first two years of an officer's career sets the tone for the entire career. It is the time of greatest stress and the time of greatest need for a role model and a mentor.

Information Considered

Task Force member experience. Discussion with police officers.

Objective

Provides a threshold opportunity to broaden and accelerate the process of gaining experience, judgment and instincts.

Evaluation Criteria

Observe differences, if any, after two years between participating and non-participating officers in maturity, experience and confidence.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 57

Train officers to appreciate the impact of their contacts on citizens.

Foundation

Police officers need to understand, and develop sensitivity to, the dramatic and stressful effect their encounters with citizens generate. As many as three police units have been seen responding, apparently out of boredom, to an uneventful and routine traffic stop. This directs unnecessary public attention to what is already an embarrassing and unpleasant situation.

Information Considered

Task Force members' experience. Ride-a-long observations. Discussions with citizens.

Objective

Minimize the unpleasant aspects of routine police encounters.

Evaluation Criteria

None required.

Cost

None

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 58

Recommend the SDPD retain, either full-time, or on consultant basis, a government/community relation's specialist. Concurrent with this, the SDPD should consider establishing a public relations department.

Foundation

During the course of this Task Force it became clear to certain Task Force members that a better understanding of public perception and political impact of SDPD actions and attitudes would be a positive benefit. Much, if not all, of the criticism leveled at this Task Force, and the SDPD, might have been mitigated, or completely avoided, by the guidance of someone trained and/or experienced in the areas of sensitivity that exist between a public agency and the public. Someone who understands that perception is reality. For instance, the need for a properly balanced, and civilian led, Oversight Committee, and the role of the police participants in the committees, would have been anticipated.

Information Considered

Media reaction to the Task Force. Public comments. Discussions with SDPD leadership, as well as rank and file. Task Force experience. Discussions with experienced government officials.

Objective

The avoidance of unnecessary media and public criticism.

Evaluation Criteria

None required.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 59

If not already in place, institute periodic analysis of training processes to identify perishable skills; that is, those skills that require periodic refresher training to maintain competency. Once these skills are identified, insure that periodic training is established and conducted to maintain competency.

Foundation

Certain skills and attitudes require periodic reinforcement and training to insure that appropriate competency levels are maintained. Public and police officer safety demands that these be identified and accommodated.

Information Considered

Selected review of the Academy curriculum, attendance at classes, and interviews with police officers.

Objective

More efficient use of time. Allocation of time to core areas.

Evaluation Criteria

This is a continuing process. Success will be measured by officer performance in the field.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 60

As part of his commitment to maintaining a dialogue with the community, and community based organizations (e.g. neighborhood associations, town councils, church groups, etc.), Chief Bejarano consider a periodic column in one or more San Diego city newspapers regarding mutual issues of importance.

Foundation

The leadership of the SDPD must be visible and accessible to the citizens of San Diego. The mission and message of the SDPD, as well as information to the public, must be disseminated by all available means.

Information Considered

Community comment. Committee members input.

Objective

Dialogue and responsiveness to the community may help mitigate or eliminate misunderstandings and misinformation.

Evaluation Criteria

Improved community relations.

Cost

None

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 61

Mandate that **all** officers view the video titled “Recognizing Mental Illness: A Proactive Approach.” This video is produced by California Peace Officer Standards and Training.

Foundation

The Task Force was assertive in suggesting that there is a need and responsibility to expand the basic knowledge possessed by officers when dealing with, and responding to persons with a mental illness.

Information Considered

The Task Force reviewed all current training materials and cited a need for expansion.

Objective

To provide additional basic skills and knowledge for officers to effectively deal with interactions involving persons with a mental illness.

Evaluation Criteria

The success or failure will be measured through a combination of officer evaluations and testing on the subject matter. The time frame will be six months from the receipt of the video, for all officers to view and submit an evaluation.

Cost

None, the Video Graphics Unit can make additional copies of the training video.

Funding

Department Budget, if needed.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 62

Expand and increase the level of mental health training at the San Diego Regional Law Enforcement Training Center and/or the Field Training Program by 20 hours. This additional curriculum should include scenario training while in the Academy, and mandatory visits to crisis facilities such as the Emergency Psychiatric Unit (EPU), Alzheimer's facilities, and other crisis homes and clubhouses. While in phase training all officers should be required to ride along with units such as HOT, PERT, or EPU.

Foundation

Members of the Task Force discussed the current level of training provided, and agreed that although the instructors are recognized as subject matter experts, they are limited by the current number of hours offered and the means of delivery. A need exists to expose the officers to the mental health community prior to a crisis situation or police intervention. This may increase the level of understanding for both law enforcement and the mental health community.

Information Considered

Examination of the current training curriculum at the Regional Police Academy and discussion with members of the specific training core. Group discussion involving all members of the Task Force.

Objective

Decrease the stigma attached to mental health issues and increase the knowledge for both the mental health community and law enforcement. Establish a "comfort level" for all persons who respond to mental health crisis situations. Establish and maintain a team approach to these types of incidents.

Evaluation Criteria

Class evaluation
Employee testing
Reduction in the number of complaints
Improved public perception
Survey of affected facilities

Cost

None

Funding

None

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 63

Create training for all supervisors to facilitate stress debriefing after critical incidents.

Foundation

Currently, there are classes and materials related to tactical and/or technical debriefings. Supervisors frequently conduct these types of debriefs with positive results, and favorable response from involved personnel. Supervisors however, have little or no experience with emotional debriefings.

Information Considered

Currently, the department possesses limited knowledge regarding the effects of critical/emotional incidents relative to Post Trauma Stress.

Objective

Decrease stress in the workplace. Increase community relations and understanding of mental health and homeless issues. Enhance the ability of officers to effectively respond to repeat/similar incidents.

Evaluation Criteria

Group feedback immediately following debriefing sessions. Supervisors should receive this training within one year of promotion. Create a pre-incident survey to determine the current level of understanding.

Cost

Personnel costs related to an additional 20 hours of training.

Funding

Department Budget.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 64

Expand PERT and HOT if appropriate facilities and programs are available and budgeted.

Foundation

The Task Force agreed that there is a need to expand PERT/HOT to provide coverage for more service areas and hours within a 24 hour period. Additionally, there is a need to expand PERT/HOT training to include more officers. The goal is 24/7 coverage within the City of San Diego. Mental health and social services will need to expand incrementally along with PERT/HOT to handle the increased workload.

Information Considered

Task Force members representing PERT/HOT, mental health professionals, consumers, and an examination of current caseload versus staffing levels.

Objective

To provide more coverage and maintain / ensure a proactive philosophy. To consistently utilize PERT/HOT to de-escalate situations and provide effective crisis intervention and proper placement of the subject.

Evaluation Criteria

The time frame for implementation should be six months to one year. A means of evaluation may include the following:

HOT - number of persons placed in programs and the number of complaints / radio calls.

PERT - increased/decreased community involvement in the new expanded areas, and the rate of 5150 recidivism.

Costs

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Officer per year (incl. benefits) = | \$77,224. |
| Clinician per year = | \$80,000 |
| Case manager per year = | \$70,000 |
| Police vehicle = | \$26,000. |

Funding

Efforts should be made to locate funding from the following sources:

Community resources

Private donations

Grant sources

City and County cooperative efforts

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 65

Maintain and support the Serial Inebriate Program (SIP). Consider placing a clinician at Detox to assist in the assessment of the dually diagnosed subjects who enter the facility. The clinicians would have the ability to check mental health records to determine the most appropriate care. In addition, consider forming a system similar to Hospital Outpatient Services (HOS), available at Detox to properly place qualified individuals.

Foundation

The current SIP under the direction of Western Division has demonstrated the value of the program. Expansion should be considered to other parts of the city. Utilize the court process as an ultimate means of solving the problems associated with chronic subjects.

Information Considered

Task Force members representing PERT/HOT, mental health professionals, consumers, and an examination of current caseload versus staffing levels. Statistics provided clearly stated the effectiveness of the SIP at Western Division.

Objective

The placement of qualified subjects into residential treatment programs or compulsory jail time. There is substantial evidence to indicate that sobriety can lead to cost savings for the city, county, and emergency rooms. The ultimate objective is diversion from law enforcement intervention.

Evaluation Criteria

The time frame for implementation is six months to one year. Evaluation of the program may be based on the following:

- Overall cost savings
- Days of sobriety
- Rate of recidivism
- Number of subjects placed in program
- Number of subjects placed in jail
- Decrease/increase of SDPD involvement in these cases

Cost

Typical costs associated with the following:

Facilities

Beds

Booking procedures

SDPD costs

Cost for one clinician per year - \$80,000

Follow-up care

Funding

Efforts should be made to locate funding from the following sources:

County Substance Abuse

Courts

City/County cooperative efforts

Private donations

Public resources

Grant sources

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

No substantial opposition to this recommendation. However, some members of the committee feel that assigning a clinician to Detox would only be effective if the time in Detox was expanded from the current 4 hour stay to a "to be determined" legal limit less than 24 hours. Proper evaluation and/or referral could then be made. A 4 hour stay does not provide sufficient time to make a proper evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 66

Create a quick and valuable resource guide for officers to use when dealing with the homeless population or persons with a mental illness. Consider storing this guide on the AFR within each police vehicle. Also, allow for the ability to edit the information contained in the AFR.

Foundation

The Task Force agrees that a need exists to provide officers with immediate access to available resources on a 24/7 basis.

Information Considered

Task Force members representing PERT/HOT, mental health professionals, consumers, and an examination of current caseload versus staffing levels.

Objective

To provide officers and first responders with more tools and knowledge of available resources. To more appropriately handle on site situations involving the homeless and persons with a mental illness.

Evaluation Criteria

The time frame for distribution of the resource guide should be six months to one year. An officer survey should be created to evaluate the value of the guides. Additionally, a system to track referrals should be utilized.

Cost

Minimal costs associated with print material and production.

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 67

Create an educational video that depicts police officers responding to a multiplicity of scenarios involving persons with a mental illness, focusing on the safety concerns as described by the officers. In addition, include in the video a consumer describing the genuine fear of police officers, and the stigma attached to the mental health community.

Foundation

The Task Force believes that there is a need to educate all parties involved in these situations, primarily police officers and consumers. There exists a need to decrease the stereotypical behavior of the community, ultimately enhancing the relationship between consumers and police officers.

Information Considered

Law enforcement, consumers, media, medical and legal profession, and the community.

Objective

The following objectives were cited by the Task Force:

Improve community relations

Enhance awareness of issues confronting both sides

Increase options to mitigate the use of force

Video exposure to the police academy, area commands, media groups, and consumer groups

Consider the option of joint viewing with police officers and consumers, followed by group discussion

Evaluation Criteria

Consumer feedback

A decrease/increase in the number of complaints against police officers

Post video evaluation by police officers and consumers

Costs

To be determined

Funding

Option 1 - SDPD Video Graphics Unit produce the video with funding from current training budget.

Option 2 - Utilize local media on a voluntary basis.

Option 3 - Locate and secure proper grant funding.

Option 4 - Market the video state/nation wide with proceeds going towards community based programs.

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 68

Adopt the revised version of Department Procedure 6.20, “Mental Health Procedures” policy, attached hereto as Tab H.

Foundation

After reviewing the department’s current Mental Health Procedure, the committee agreed that the policy needed to be updated to include current resources, protocol and training. In addition, the language in the “old” procedure was not necessarily reflective of the positive relationship between consumers, the public, and law enforcement. The committee recommended that the language be changed to eliminate the traditional stigma attached to the mental health community.

Information Considered

Committee feedback
Training materials
Current procedure 6.20

Objective

Author and distribute a department procedure that is credible and reflective of community concerns, allowing the reader the ability to reasonably understand law enforcement response to persons with a mental illness and/or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Evaluation Criteria

As per current SDPD procedures regarding the issuance and distribution of departmental correspondence.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 69

Adopt the revised version of Department Procedure 6.28, “Psychiatric Emergency Response Team” policy, attached hereto as Tab I.

Author a Department Policy and Procedure specifically documenting the role and function of the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT). The document should allow the reader to understand the differences between a PERT response to mental health type radio calls and a patrol officers’ response to the same.

Foundation

The committee possessed a general understanding of PERT’s philosophy and operational protocol. However, they believe that patrol officers lack a complete understanding of PERT. All officers should know when PERT units should be requested, and understand the benefits and limitations of these teams. By achieving this, the program will likely become more efficient, providing necessary services to the consumer and law enforcement.

Information Considered

Committee feedback.

Objective

Author and distribute a department procedure that is credible and reflective of community concerns, allowing the reader the ability to reasonably understand law enforcement response to persons with a mental illness and/or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Evaluation Criteria

As per current SDPD procedures regarding the issuance and distribution of departmental correspondence.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 70

Read, evaluate and implement at least some of the recommendations of this Task Force and return to this Task Force to identify those items which will be implemented.

Foundation

In 1997, the San Diego Police Department organized a similar task force. In reviewing the recommendations made at that time, members of this committee found them to be virtually the same as the recommendations currently being offered. It is respectfully recommended that recommendations offered be actually implemented in some form.

Without implementation, the recommendations of any Task Force are meaningless and the process is demoralizing.

The good intentions of all people involved appear to the public to be merely window dressing, while both community members and police officers no longer want to participate in any process of this nature.

Information Considered

Common sense.

Conversations with members of the police force.

Conversations with the community. This Task Force had extreme difficulty attracting and keeping community members to participate in this process and, in fact, suffered from an embarrassing lack of broad-based or consistent community participation. One reason commonly cited that participation was declined was that the Task Force would not make any difference, its recommendations would not be implemented and it was therefore not worth the community members time.

Objective

Improved community and police morale.

Increased credibility for the San Diego Police Department.

Increased community participation on future Task Forces.

Evaluation Criteria

Review the recommendations of the Task Force and see how many have been implemented and to what effect.

Time Frame

Three years.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 71

Identify and review other early-warning systems in place throughout the country.

Develop an early-warning computer system to identify employees and officers with ongoing problems.

Develop a mandatory system of follow-up, counseling and review for those employees and officers.

Inform the public that such a system is in place.

Foundation

One significant problem in community relations is a concern that police officers with problems are not identified early enough to avoid tragic consequences. A system that flags officers with recurrent problems, identifies their need for help or correction would ease the public's concerns that these officers are being overlooked or disregarded.

Information Considered

Internal Affairs Lieutenant

Officer Training and Cultural Diversity Core Instructor

Sam Knott, deceased

Objective

Increase the public's confidence in its police force.

Increase quality of staffing in the police department.

Evaluation Criteria

To be determined.

Cost

\$40,000

Funding

Department Budget

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 72

Upgrade police department website by:

Increasing staffing. The person responsible for making updates to the website should not also be the only person responding to the thousands of issues and questions generated by the website on a weekly basis. This is imperative.

Attempt to get more autonomy for the police department website from the City. The issues facing the police department are different from the City.

Hire a professional web designer to upgrade the look of the website. (See the San Diego FBI website and websites of other police departments.)

Do not require user identification to access information from the website.

Post undisputed, factual developments on high-visibility cases on the website. Again, do not require user identification to access that information.

Post information on upcoming community forums that people can attend.

Use the website to promote the community leadership patrol academy.

Post important numbers and e-mail access to help increase response time.

Post police complaint forms that can be e-mailed back to the department. These can require user identification.

Foundation

The website is a powerful tool that is not fully effective because:

It is difficult to find on the internet, even through search engines;

It is buried within the City of San Diego system;

It is poorly designed and visually uninteresting;

It is understaffed;

It supports the department more than the community's need for information.

Information Considered

Website staff and the website itself.

Objective

Use this very powerful tool to increase communication, trust and understanding.

Project the image of a responsive, organized and up-to-date institution.

Decrease calls that come to 911 through information available on the website.

Evaluation Criteria

Conduct community focus groups with people who design websites.

Time Frame

Five years.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 73

Re-Establish a centralized, semi-autonomous Public Affairs Unit.

Foundation

The Police Department disbanded the Public Affairs Unit, decentralizing its operations and effectively made public relations everybody's job.

Public relations is a very complex process that requires professional expertise and an overarching coordinated plan in order to be effective. Public relations cannot be everybody's job, although everyone should be trained to deal with the public.

Decentralization seems to have created pockets in the department that are very effective at community outreach and pockets that are less effective where officers feel unsupported and forced to do double duty.

A Public Affairs Unit would:

Offer a central location for processing complaints

Offer a relatively autonomous agency, separate from the police department, for processing those complaints

Give the public confidence that their concerns were being processed through a central location, rather than trickling through a system that may or may not get their message.

Present a coordinated, consistent image to the public

Objective

Decrease public confusion by establishing a central unit for public relations.

Increase public confidence in the police department through communication
Increase police morale by giving them the professional support needed in this area.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 74

Partner with Deaf Community Services to provide quicker service and attention to 911 calls where sign language interpreters will be needed.

Foundation

Police department contact with the deaf community creates unique problems in communications, which can be fixed through better communication and sensitivity.

Information Considered

Kary Krumdick, Deaf Community member

Objective

Increase quality of contact and speed of response time to the deaf community.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 75

Increase collaboration with schools by:

Promote use of SDPD website as an educational tool

Potentially design a curriculum for San Diego schools to teach students about web use, while promoting the SDPD youth message.

Providing stickers, comic books, etc.

Continue to support the DARE program

Collaborate with the San Diego City Schools through after school programs

Apply for city funding for 6 to 6 critical hours program

Develop partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce to develop successful model program which partner with local schools.

Foundation

An early, positive introduction to police officers can reduce problems later. This is perhaps one of the best tools officers have to get to know the community they are working in.

Information Considered

Officer Training and Cultural Diversity Core Instructor

Objective

Reduce misunderstandings and altercations between youth and police by introducing children at an early age to how police officers can help their communities.

Increase officer morale by giving them an active, positive role in the community.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 76

Establish police houses within communities, based on principles similar to the fire department's fire houses.

Officers would live there and be available 24 hours a day, four days at a time.

Provide merit pay for officers who develop strong bonds with the communities they serve through activities such as coaching or assisting youth.

Foundation

Community members would come to know the officers protecting their community because the officers would live and participate in that community.

Police officers would understand the community better because they would live there, shop for food, participate in community events.

Community members would feel safer because they would know where to go for help and they would have the opportunity to know the officers assigned to their community.

Objective

Reduce community fear of crime

Reduce community apprehension and ignorance of police officers

Increase community relations

Increase community awareness

Increase officer knowledge of community

Evaluation Criteria

Conduct community focus groups to test effectiveness.

Time Frame

Five years.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

Some members felt this was not feasible due to cost and lack of officer support.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 77

Have the Chief of Police/Assistant Chief available, on-line once each week, to talk with the public.

Foundation

This would increase public access to the police department, encourage public participation and discussion.

Create a venue where people with an ongoing interest in the police department and its policies could be identified and invited to participate in a Task Force such as this.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase public confidence and access to decision-making authority of the police department.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 78

Review Communications Division processes of hiring, retention and promotion.

Compare wages to other similar size organizations.

Seek alternative ways to recruit 911 dispatchers.

Develop partnerships with agencies which prepare potential employees in order to decrease search costs and the high attrition rates.

Review merit pay or rewards process for officers, dispatchers and communications employees who have demonstrated a greater ability to communicate with certain communities, either by being bilingual or by having a significant community involvement.

Foundation

Retention and morale in the Communications Division is a problem.

Information Considered

Communications Division presentation.

Objective

Increase the quality of service by the Communication Division to the community through retention of the most effective employees.

Increase retention and morale.

Evaluation Criteria

Lower attrition rate

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 79

Provide business cards for uniformed patrol officers.

Foundation

A uniformed patrol officer is usually the first and often the only representative of the police department the public will meet. We can increase the level of professionalism within the ranks of the patrol division by providing every patrol officer with his/her own printed business cards.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase access and communication between the police department and the public.

Make officers easier to identify after contact.

Improve officer morale and sense of professionalism.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 80

Update and redistribute the wallet-sized cards that inform the public of their rights as well as their responsibilities when they encounter police.

Foundation

The card could be better organized.

The card should be reviewed to make it more effective and to refresh its content with current issues.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Educate the public regarding their rights upon police contact.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 81

Produce and distribute video and audio PSA's that encourage citizens to get to know their communities and the officers who serve them by taking part in the department's ride-along program.

Foundation

Many community members would like to participate in the ride-along program but are not aware of how to apply to the program.

Community members who do participate in this program gain a better understanding of the complexities of police work and can make more effective recommendations for its improvement.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increased understanding of the police department and how it works within the community.

Increased confidence in the police department.

More effective participation by the public in improving the police department.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 82

Provide community members with the tools to start or revitalize the Neighborhood Watch Program.

Provide updated signs at a reduced rate.

Foundation

There appears to be less information on this important program than was formerly available.

Information Considered

Neighborhood Watch is a good program and it should be renewed and refreshed.

Objective

Reduced concern and fear within neighborhood.

Increased communication between police and community members.

Increased communication within the community.

Reduced crime due to all of the above.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 83

Provide renewed information to the community about the role of Crime Stoppers and how they can participate to solve crime in their neighborhoods.

Foundation

There appears to be less information on this important program than was formerly available. It is a good program and it should be reviewed and refreshed.

Objective

Increase community participation in crime prevention.

Reduce crime.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 84

Start Youth Forums to speak about how they perceive law enforcement in their communities.

Speak with parents about arrest procedures.

Talk with youths about juvenile hall procedures.

Teach youths about their rights and responsibilities under law enforcement.

Foundation

A large percentage of the population with which police officers have contact are youths. Negative contacts can be reduced if youths and their families are informed regarding investigative and arrest procedures.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Reduce crime by establishing an early relationship with youths and their families.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 85

Develop community information program about 911 through:

Public service commercials on television and radio

Public service advertisements in local newspapers and magazines

School outreach presentations

Community outreach presentations

Implement a second “811” or “711” for less extreme emergency calls.

Foundation

Citizens have limited knowledge of how their 911 calls are prioritized and dispatched. This leads to frustration when calling for assistance and delay in assessing the citizen’s problem. A secondary level phone number will allow the public to prioritize their own calls.

Information Considered

Presentation by the Department Communication Division.

Objective

Increase public awareness about how 911 works and the information that dispatch operators require in order to help the caller.

Increase officer safety by educating the public on what dispatch needs to know.

Increase public confidence in dispatch by educating them on how the process works.

Increase dispatch operators morale by decreasing abusive, confusing calls.

Increase dispatch operators morale by publicly highlighting their importance in the effectiveness of police response.

Evaluation Criteria

Monitor changes in quality of dispatch calls.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 86

Conduct a public relations campaign on police officer uniforms. Many SDPD officers are mistaken for INS, Sheriff's or Highway Patrol officers.

Foundation

Confusion by the public on the role of each type of police officer creates problems, particularly when an SDPD officer is mistaken for an INS officer. If a victim or witness is an illegal alien, they are reluctant to come forward.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase public confidence in the SDPD by identifying who they are and explaining their function.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 87

Provide public service announcements on radio and television, in English and Spanish, on the importance of emergency vehicle right-of-way.

Foundation

This seems to be an issue of increasing problems with the public. San Diego is a city full of immigrants who come from countries where there may not be emergency vehicles. It would be helpful to provide this information regularly to the public.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase safety on city streets.

Evaluation Criteria

Monitor accidents caused by refusing emergency right-of-way.

Time Frame

Five years.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 88

Establish an award presented annually by the SDPD to media who promote a positive image of the police department through their accurate and balanced reporting, help improve the public’s understanding of the role of law enforcement.

Factors that will be considered in assessing this award will include the presentation of public service messages that promote police goals.

Foundation

This would provide recognition to the media for their efforts in this area

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase communication between the police department and the media, in a positive manner.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Time Frame

Five years.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 89

Demonstrate a greater presence in the community by holding annual “open house” at various facilities, such as the Canine Training Facility during which the various police units that make up the police department are presented (e.g, S.W.A.T., Horse Unit, Motors Unit, Harbor Unit, Bicycle Unit, Airborne Law Enforcement).

Foundation

Community outreach.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase outreach to the public.

Increase public knowledge about the police department.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 90

Make available to the public a series of short (2-hour) menu-style classes covering various police issues, policies and procedures, such as:

Shoot/Don't Shoot Scenarios
Police Use of Force
Street Gangs
Graffiti
Self-Defense
Police Pursuit Driving

Foundation

This will increase the public's awareness of police work in a convenient, non-threatening environment.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase public understanding of police work.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 91

Place SDPD first generation F.A.T.S. simulator in a motorhome and take it to community meetings throughout San Diego.

Foundation

This would give the community a first-hand, convenient opportunity to experience police situations and give officers an opportunity to interact with the public in a positive manner

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increase public awareness of the complexities officers face in hostile situations.

Give officers a non-threatening environment to discuss their work with the public.

Increase opportunities for officer recruitment.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 92

Over the next six months, dramatically increase the number of canine demonstrations performed at community and business meetings.

Foundation

Increase community awareness and outreach through one of the department's most public-attractive tools, the police dog.

Information Considered

Task Force Members

Objective

Increased public awareness.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 93

Refresher media training at R.O.T.

Foundation

The three-hour block of training needs reinforcement after officers have been in the field. This provides one more opportunity to educate officers in media relations. They will have a better point of reference based on their experience.

Information Considered

Input from media survey responses and from all members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

Greater understanding of the media and an opportunity to move closer to the department goal of being as open as possible with the media/public.

Evaluation Criteria

Officers will evaluate the class itself at the time of training. Over time, we'll know if media-officer relations in the field have improved.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 94

Produce a media guidebook that explains department policies and procedures for the release of information at use-of-force and other incidents and provides key department telephone numbers.

Foundation

Many local reporters are new to this area and have never covered SDPD or have not covered the department in some time and are unfamiliar with its policies and procedures. This guidebook could be updated regularly (personnel and phone number changes).

Information Considered

Input from media members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

Media personnel who are better informed about department guidelines are more likely to report accurately and fairly on department activities. They'll have a better understanding of what is available and what is not available (and why). The guidebook could be handed to every media person as he/she receives a department media pass.

Evaluation Criteria

None

Cost

A basic media guidebook of the department is distributed periodically. It is produced inexpensively in the Media Relations Office. A more formal guidebook could be created with the assistance of the City Print Shop, cost To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 95

Amend Department Procedure 1.30 (Press Release and Media Relations) to further clarify the “EXCEPTION” under Section III. The exception should clearly state that the Homicide Unit will conduct all interviews at the scene and all follow-up interview requests.

Foundation

The current verbiage does not adequately delineate media guidelines for the Homicide Unit.

Information Considered:

Input from all members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

This will further educate the media as to the Homicide Unit’s responsibilities regarding the release of information by making it clear that the unit -- and only the unit -- speaks on matters under its investigation.

1.30 can also be rewritten to further delineate between “at the scene” and follow-up interviews. This amendment could be added to the media guidebook discussed in the previous recommendation.

Evaluation Criteria

No specific time frame or mechanism for assessing success or failure. A reduction in the number of homicide-related interview requests directed at the Media Relations Office should indicate that members of the media more clearly understand whom to contact about homicides and/or officer-involved shootings.

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 96

Provide quicker release of the name, rank and years of service of an officer involved in an on-duty shooting.

Foundation

While it is information that eventually is released, it may take days or weeks for the media and public to learn the information. It should be released as soon as is practicable after the officer's family is notified of the incident.

Information Considered

Input from media survey and from all members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

To more closely follow the department's goal of being as open as possible -- as soon as possible -- with information that is public.

Evaluation Criteria

No evaluation needed

Cost

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 97

Annual or semi-annual roundtable discussion of issues between Department officials and media.

Foundation

Such a meeting would provide better communication and understanding of media and police needs at scenes and would help prevent problems from occurring. It would encourage the two groups to meet regularly without a “crisis reason.”

Information Considered

Input from media survey responses and from all members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

Better regular communication will reduce problems between media and the Department.

Evaluation Criteria

The best measure is feedback from media personnel and from officers. We could not begin to evaluate until after the first one or two roundtables.

Cost

To be determined. If there is a cost for a meeting site and/or for printing of announcements, etc., it could be divided between the department and the media (perhaps the local chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists).

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 98

A public information officer assigned to work weekends (and three days during the week).

Foundation

The media frequently report difficulty in getting timely, accurate information on incidents that occur on the weekend. They call the Watch Commander's Office, which often has minimal information and little or no time to research the incident.

Information Considered

Input from media survey responses and from all members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

To provide a better, more timely release of accurate information to the media. Greater opportunity to promote more positive stories about the Department.

Evaluation Criteria

The best measure is feedback from media personnel. We could not begin to evaluate until after the assignment of a weekend PIO.

Cost .

To be determined

Funding

Department budget

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

A Task Force Member advised that the department's policies and procedures already provide for the gathering and dissemination of information after-hours and on weekends (1.30/IV/D/2: The Watch Commander shall diligently seek out relevant information from field units...").

RECOMMENDATION NO. 99

Create a program where officers can ride for a day with media.

Foundation

Officers need a better understanding of how media gather and disseminate news. They would see deadlines come and go and the difficulties news people have in gathering information. The Oceanside Blade-Citizen did this a number of years ago before merging with the Escondido Times-Advocate to form the current North County Times.

Information Considered

Input from media survey responses and from all members of the Media Responsibility Team.

Objective

Officers will learn why the media do what they do and how they do it. This would promote a better working relationship.

Evaluation Criteria

Feedback from department personnel and the media once the ride-along program starts.

Cost

To be determined

Funding

To be determined

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None

RECOMMENDATION NO. 100

Allow a sergeant or a lieutenant (non-Homicide Unit) to give basic information at a homicide of officer-involved shooting scene until investigators arrive.

Foundation

Reporters frequently have to wait for an hour or more for a briefing by the Homicide Unit. Several deadlines may pass without accurate information.

Information Considered

Input from the Media Responsibility Team and a media survey conducted by the Team.

Objective

Earlier statements by police would provide some official information and would reduce speculation and inaccuracies in media reporting of an incident.

Evaluation Criteria

Once this proposal is implemented, it could be monitored on a case-by-case basis. After six months, a determination could be made whether to continue or revert to current policy (or another option).

Cost .

None

Funding

N/A

Additional Comments and/or Opposing Views

None, although SDPD team members expect some opposition from the Homicide Unit regarding the premature release of information that should be kept under wraps for the time being.