

CHARLESTON

POLICE DEPARTMENT



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December 31, 2019

Racial Bias Audit Updates

Audit Update – December 31, 2019

Since the release of the CNA's Racial Bias Audit report on October 1st, the Charleston Police Department has been working to build a thoughtful and intentional plan to implement the recommendations outlined. Many of the findings and recommendations can be accomplished by implementing a new policy or completing a training course, however, we want to ensure the adjustments made are part of a comprehensive plan to be more accountable and transparent to the citizens of Charleston. To accomplish this, CPD must first develop a strategic plan involving our City and department leaders, community partners, and the citizens. While we are taking steps to develop this plan, we are moving forward with some small steps.

Immediately after the release of the final report, CPD's Command Staff met to discuss and ensure understanding of all findings and recommendations. During this meeting, Captains and Lieutenants were assigned recommendations based on their current command responsibilities. Each of these is outlined in a spreadsheet that can be found on our Racial Bias Audit websiteⁱ. Additionally, the spreadsheet shows progress for recommendations as well as a field for timeline range. A few of these timelines have been assigned, but for most of the recommendations, CPD would like to engage citizens on their priorities and expectations. A forum in January will be created to have this discussion about CPD's next steps.

At the initial command meeting, it was clear that the use of data along with training and professional development will be priorities in the future. To assist with coordinating a professional development curriculum, a Sergeant position was moved to the Training Academy. After a selection process, the newly created role officially began on November 30, 2019 (Recommendation 44.1). Also from this meeting, CPD began the process to add three items relating to the audit report recommendations to the City's 2020 Budget. One of the requests was to fund a contract to provide professional guidance on developing a plan and monitoring CPD's response to the audit. This contract is largely to obtain resources for CPD from an entity that has expertise with implementing changes across several areas and ensuring accountability to citizens. The other two requests were new civilian positionsⁱⁱ. The first is a compliance inspector to be assigned to the Professional Standards Division. This position will be specifically responsible for conducting internal audits of the policies and practices within the Police Department. In addition to ensuring compliance, the inspector will also monitor for efficiency and effectiveness (Recommendation 16.1). The other position will be an executive level position reporting directly to the Chief of Police as the Director of Procedural Justice and Research. Initially, this director will be responsible for working with the previously mentioned contract recipient to develop and implement CPD's plan for tackling the audit's recommendations. This position will also direct commanders within CPD to ensure policies and procedures are fair, equitable, and procedurally just. Additionally, this position will have the responsibility of coordinating research with colleges and universities to allow CPD to be a national leader in police policy and programs. All three requests were approved in the City's 2020 Budget on December 17, 2019, and CPD will proceed with soliciting bids for the contract and announcement of the positions.

So far this year, two lieutenants completed a command leadership college and two more are scheduled to attend during the first quarter of 2020. Two additional lieutenants completed a three-week executive leadership course hosted by the Police Executive Research Forum. CPD has also developed a plan to provide command leadership training to all commanders. With the addition of a Sergeant to the Training Academy, planning is underway for providing leadership development training to all first-line supervisors (Recommendation 44.1). The Training Division has already completed two days of training to all current Sergeants on the topics of problem oriented policing, supervisor liability, and improvements in the process to document supervisor complaints.

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CPD's Internal Affairs Unit has been able to receive training and upgrades on the department complaint and use of force reporting software. These updates and expanded knowledge of our system allow for officers assigned to Internal Affairs to improve CPD's reporting capabilities as they develop new processes for addressing several of the recommendations (18.1, 18.2, 21.1, 21.2, 22.1, 23.1, 24.1 and 47.1). The Internal Affairs Commander has also started the process for CPD to participate in the FBI's National Use of Force Data Collection. Within a few weeks, CPD will be able to begin reporting to the system, which tracks certain types of use of force throughout the country. CPD has not had any qualifying uses of force so far in 2019, however, through our participation, CPD gains access to aggregate data and use of force trends across the country.

CPD continued to send officers to Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and a total of 30 more officers were certified as CIT Officers in 2019 (Recommendation 41.1). This course is in high demand in the low country and the professional resources to conduct this training are limited, however, CPD is working with neighboring agencies to use the available resources efficiently. CPD's CIT Commander has been in contact with the State Coordinator of Crisis Intervention Training to develop a re-certification course to supplement the in-house quarterly training conducted by CPD in coordination with Charleston-Dorchester Mental Health and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Currently a re-certification course does not exist in South Carolina (Recommendation 42.1).

The Office of Community Oriented Policing was created in May 2019, and has been steadily increasing their capabilities especially in the area of youth engagement. Community Action Team (CAT) Officers, Commanders, and Officers from various divisions have been attending regular events such as Cocoa with a Cop, Reading Partners, Game Nights at the Ronald McDonald House, Lunch Buddy Program, and held a three-day youth basketball program (Recommendation 25.1). The team is also working to develop a Youth Citizens' Academy and Youth Mentor Program in 2020. To find out about these events, please follow CPD on social media at: [Facebook: CityofCharlestonPD](#), Instagram: charlestonpolicedepartment, and Twitter: @CharlestonPD .

Most notably over the last few months, the Office of Community Oriented Policing has worked in conjunction with the Illumination Project, the Eastside Community Development Corporation, and City Department heads to address concerns after several shootings and a murder. In September, key leaders organized the Eastside Summitⁱⁱⁱ where City leaders listened to concerns. Mayor Tecklenburg and City of Charleston department heads including Chief Reynolds committed to addressing the concerns brought forward. After several follow up meetings, community members and city leaders are seeing a positive impact for everyone. Although there is still work to be done on the Eastside, the success so far has started discussions on replicating the model in other areas such as James Island.

In addition to the projects and programs, Captain Thompson is working to increase the level of community engagement, creating partnerships, and problem solving for all officers (Recommendations 26.1 & 26.2). Every new officer now receives eight hours of culture and diversity training that includes a trip to the slave museum, lunch with residents at a local senior center, and foot patrols on the Eastside (Recommendation 27.1). As a part of the previously mentioned two-day training for Sergeants, these first line supervisors receive four hours of training on community oriented policing including recommendations from the community such as officer presence, walking through neighborhoods and getting out of their cars to speak with residents in a non-enforcement capacity (Recommendations 26.1, 27.1, and 28.1). This portion of instruction also includes a heartfelt testimonial from an Eastside resident talking about the importance of officers working with the citizens. Captain Thompson is also working with the Captain of Patrol to include community outreach in all immediate action plans (Recommendation 26.2). These plans are typically utilized in response to a significant event such as a murder, rash of burglaries, or ongoing community concern. By incorporating community outreach, officers are able to address the immediate concern and limit negative encounters with law abiding citizens.

For the past few months, a group of supervisors and officers has been working on a schedule to transition the patrol schedule away from a rotating 28-day schedule to non-rotating shifts (Recommendation 29.1). In addition to many health benefits for officers, non-rotating patrol shifts allow for officers to better understand and get to know their patrol areas. The group working on this is fine tuning the guiding policy and planning for implementation towards the end of the first quarter of 2020.

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With the audit report in hand and seeing CPD's Strategic Plan coming to a close at the end of 2019, CPD reached out to the College of Charleston's Riley Institute to assist with facilitating a discussion amongst command staff members to develop our strategic goals for the next five years. The first meeting was in December and there are several meetings being scheduled during the first weeks of 2020. These goals and objectives will intertwine new goals, objectives from the Illumination Project Strategic Plan (which is scheduled to end in 2019 as well), and the recommendations from the Racial Bias Audit. In addition to providing overall direction, the guidance CPD commanders are receiving during these meetings will assist with developing strategic plans in the areas of traffic, recruiting, and community outreach as recommended by the Racial Bias Audit (Recommendations 1.2, 26.1, and 35.1).

ⁱ <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/2250/Racial-Bias-Audit>

ⁱⁱ The full job postings are at: <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/1118/Employment>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.counton2.com/news/local-news/charleston-police-and-city-officials-meet-with-eastside-neighbors-to-talk-about-making-it-safer/>

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