

Draft Recommendations to the Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force

Presented by the Community Policing Subcommittee

County of Sonoma, California

December 8, 2014

DRAFT

Recommendation #1

Improve Critical Incident Response [DRAFT]

Summary

Responding effectively to critical incidents is about more than dealing with perpetrators, victims and crime scenes. Critical incidents can have profound effects on the families of those involved and the communities they represent. Addressing the needs of these stakeholders in a personal and professional manner and understanding the impact these events have on their lives is critical to fostering trust and good will between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Failure to recognize and address the diverse needs of families and communities following critical incidents may inadvertently cause alienation, misunderstandings and lack of trust.

Brief Overview of Process

In preparing the recommendations regarding critical incident response, the Community Policing subcommittee reviewed several policies from jurisdictions both inside and outside the State of California. Some of the recommendations put forth below reflect policies used in the past by local law enforcement agencies, while others were developed specifically in response to an identified need in the County. In addition, the subcommittee conducted several interviews with local law enforcement personnel and many community leaders regarding this topic. We also considered the recommendations put forth in the presentation to the Task Force by family members involved in critical incidents in the County.

Recommendation

- A. A non-uniformed representative of the investigating law enforcement agency be immediately dispatched to the scene of any critical incident to act as a liaison between the officers at the scene and the family and community members present at the scene.

Rationale

Law enforcement (LE) at the scene are focused on securing the scene and preserving the evidence and are not able to respond to citizen inquiries. Rumors can run rampant without the intervention of a responsible representative from LE explaining to those on the scene what is happening and when information will be made available about the investigation.

- B. A civilian liaison remain on scene as long as the community is present.

Rationale

It is important that the law enforcement agency at the scene gauge the mood of the community before leaving the scene with community members still present.

- C. Civilian liaison inform the community that a community forum will be held within 5-7 days of the incident and that they will be notified as to when and where the forum will take place.

Rationale

Rapid communication with the community is essential to avoid the development of rumors and conjecture. Open and honest dialogue goes a long way toward building confidence and trust between the community and law enforcement (LE). The understanding that a forum will be held to discuss the incident allows for a “cooling off” and lessens the development of resentment of LE and the specific officers involved.

- D. Within 48 hours of a critical incident, LE meet with key groups in the affected neighborhood and/or CBO’s that handle the type of incident (e.g. domestic violence, mental health,) to develop the plan for the community forum and the list of appropriate attendees which may include representatives from agencies that focus on officer conduct and constitutional protections (NAACP, ACLU, Los Cien, NAMI etc.)

Rationale

LE should proactively nurture and develop relationships with those who can, internally and externally, contribute to effective policing and responses to critical incidents. These relationships should begin to be nurtured immediately so that a point person is readily identified who will assist in the structure of the forum in response to a critical incident.

- E. Any press release about the incident or investigation shall be immediately posted on the LE webpage at the same time that it is released to the media.
- F. All available information (including any video and dispatch tape of the incident) be share with the community within 7 days of the incident or the specific reasons shall be publicly given as to why such information cannot be shared.

Rationale

The vast majority of information is known within the first four days of an incident. Where more information is released immediately, more confidence in LE is generated. This may require a change in philosophy particularly as it relates to advice from legal counsel.

- G. The top official of the LEA involved issue a statement of apology, condolence or regret (this is not an admission of liability) as appropriate to the community and affected family within 48 hours.)

Rationale

LE can be absolutely sorry the incident took place without admitting fault.

Expressions of sympathy can go a long way toward strengthening the community/LE relationship.

- H. The family be provided a list of service providers (counselors, etc) and funds, if necessary, to engage such providers.
- I. Within 12 hours of incidents the family be provided with a phone number for direct access to the LE representative who will act as a liaison between the family and the LEA. In addition to being the liaison, the representative shall have the following duties:
- To assure that LE treats the family with dignity and respect.
 - To arrange for a rental car or replacement phone if these have been retained for investigative reasons.
 - To provide investigative updates to the family ahead of any press releases or other disclosures to the media and public.
 - To personally deliver a copy of the incident report to the family as soon as it is deemed complete and offer to arrange a meeting with the family (and their lawyer if they have retained one) and the LE person knowledgeable about the investigation to answer questions about the incident.
 - To otherwise assist the family as needed.

Rationale

One of the major concern from families of victim's of critical incidents is the lack of information they receive and the feeling that they are being treated as suspects. This heightens mistrust and resentment at a time when cooperation is essential to the effective investigation of the incident.

- J. A meeting between the officer involved and the family (where the family desires such a meeting and the officer is amenable to one) mediated by an appropriate neutral party take place.

Rationale

It is harder to demonize people when you meet them face to face. Personal contact in a controlled mediation allows for exchanges that cannot take place in an adversarial forum, potentially increasing feelings of empathy between the officer and the family.

- K. Within 90 days of a critical incident, the LEA involved conduct a community satisfaction survey to gauge how the community is responding to its efforts.

Rationale

It is important that LE communicate with the community to get a sense of how its reaction is being viewed and avoid being seen as aloof.

An incident may be deemed “critical” significantly after the fact because of the response of LE during the investigation. When that is the case, as many of these recommendations as are applicable should be implemented.

Resources needed

It is assumed that critical incidents will be few and that current employee levels should be adequate to supply the site representative and family liaison when needed. However, some overtime pay may be required.

Minimum funds may be required for notice and site preparation for the community forum. The fund for assistance with counseling, burial etc. shall not exceed \$20,000.

Timeline/implementation recommendation

Pending.

Performance indicator(s)

Pending.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

Pending.

Recommendation #2

Enhance Law Enforcement Programs and Activities [DRAFT]

Summary

The Community Policing philosophy is based on the understanding that a strong and supportive relationship between law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and the communities they serve is critical to effective policing and community development. For some communities in Sonoma County, this relationship has been strained and trust has been eroded. In order to begin to bridge this gap and rebuild trust, new law enforcement programs and activities to engage and support communities are warranted.

Brief Overview of Process

In preparing the recommendations for Law Enforcement Programs and Activities the committee reviewed the U.S Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services publication, the San Francisco Community Policing report as well as community policing programs from around the country. In addition we interviewed local law enforcement personnel and many community leaders.

Recommendation

- A. Beginning meetings with law enforcement (LE) and community based organizations (CBO) in their “beat” areas to identify concerns and develop problem solving strategies
- B. Developing a resource list for the community and training officers to be service navigators.
- C. Providing LE with “community resource cards” specific to their beat that can be carried on their person or in their vehicle and given out to community members.

Rationale

The essence of Community Policing is the development of collaborative partnerships between law enforcement agencies and the communities and organizations they serve to identify problems and offer solutions that will increase trust and cooperation.

- D. Development of programs and outreach plans to reach youth in underserved areas with existing programs such as: Explorer Scouts, Cadet and V.I.P. programs. Such programs should have a component that starts in elementary school, so students can progress, receive mentorship, etc.

- E. Establish a Police Athletic League (P.A.L) in underserved areas
- F. Strengthening career public safety pathways for local high schools and including careers in subsidiary fields such as dispatcher and field tech. Engaging Career Technical Education programs and other CBOs in carrying out this goal.
- G. Strengthening career public safety pathways for local high schools and including careers in subsidiary fields such as dispatcher and field tech. Engaging Career Technical Education programs and other CBOs in carrying out this goal.
- H. Designing activities to be place-based or arranging transportation to site so that students and adults in underserved communities can participate; providing translation services when needed.

Rationale (D-H)

In order to have LEAs that are representative of the communities they serve, it is necessary to have an adequate pipeline of potential recruits from underserved areas and unrepresented populations. Strengthening the “pipeline” for recruitment of individuals from these areas and populations requires programs that engage young people, of diverse backgrounds and different genders, with LE and in LE activities.

- I. Increasing the availability for “ride -alongs” job shadowing activities and tours (jail, SRJC training Center) in underserved areas.
- J. Developing a communication and outreach plan to engage residents in language appropriate Citizens Academy, including place-based academies.

Rationale (I-J)

Understanding the vital role law enforcement plays in protecting the community and experiencing the officer work environment helps to bridge gaps and promotes empathy between LE and the community.

Resources needed

- Scholarships
- Transportation

Timeline/implementation recommendation

Pending.

Performance indicator(s)

Pending.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

Pending.

DRAFT

Recommendation #3

Improve Community Outreach and Engagement [DRAFT]

Summary

These recommendations focus on an active plan for developing and enhancing community stakeholder relationships between local law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and the communities they serve, with an emphasis on facilitating and improving community dialogue and interactions.

Establishing and supporting strategic relationships and programs with community-based organizations and stakeholders is central to the community policing philosophy. These relationships help to build trust between local LEAs and the communities they serve and make for better and more effective policing.

Brief Overview of Process

During its investigative process, the Community Policing subcommittee received several reports from LEAs regarding their current partnerships with community-based organizations. In addition, we reviewed the County's 2014 *A Portrait of Sonoma County* disparities report; with a particular emphasis on the five priority areas outlined in the document. We researched existing programs on a local and national level that carry out best practices in community policing activities and philosophy, and reviewed internal and external LEA processes regarding broader community outreach and engagement.

Recommendation

- A. Recommends that the SO identify and partner with established CBOs (community based organizations such as: Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County, Restorative Resources, Social Advocated for Youth, North Bay Organizing Projects, Latino Service Providers, Verity, National Alliance of Mental Illness, Los Cien, etc.) to develop community dialogues/town halls that serve to share information of interest to the community, to develop action items, and to report back to the participants and the community. The community partners can serve as a liaison between LEAs and the community and facilitate the process, help with outreach, meeting facilitation, follow-through of action items, and aiding with the reporting back of information.

Rationale

Community-based organizations work regularly with diverse populations and are aware of the outreach, needs, and work with these populations, and as such are aware of the needs in the community. They also have outreach and facilitation mechanisms available to them. Regular contact with communities, especially

disenfranchised communities, will help to build and repair trust, educate residents about activity in their community and how they can become active partners in improving their neighborhoods.

Resources needed

Law enforcement agencies staff to coordinate community dialogue sessions which can be a collaboration with community-based organization (noted above) and/or County (Health or Human Services) department staff. Requires .5 FTE at law enforcement agencies and contract with outside agency/department. Community-based organizations contract for facilitation of meetings; space fees, either shared or at school sites; law enforcement agencies staffing, data gathering and reporting back information

- B. Recommend that SO implement an intentional bilingual outreach campaign modeled after the nationally acclaimed EI Protector Program (Metro Nashville Police, CHP, Riverside, Washington State Patrol and other LEAs). The mission of the program is to create an outreach program that strengthens the relationship between the Latino community and the LEA, building collaboration with community stakeholders. The program places special emphasis on people with limited English speaking abilities. In addition, this bilingual/bicultural program provides public education through dialogue with the Latino community, instead of focusing specifically on enforcement measures.

Rationale

This nationally recognized program has been adopted by LEAs to serve Latino communities. Many of the agencies have found this to be a successful program that meets their community oriented policing goals. The model includes LEOs, partners, and an advisory board; our local SO can use the Latino Advisory Committee in the development and overseeing of this program. Attached: EI Protector Program standard operating procedures and related articles.

Resources needed

Two sworn deputies and one community services officer under a community relations commander; the support of an advisory committee; budget for outreach and programs. Attached EI Protector Program Standard Operating Procedures and related articles.

- C. Recommend LEAs develop a process for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing public contact data to identify potential disparities in practices that might indicate whether there's a difference in impact policing based on a variety of factors (gender, race, age, location, etc.)

Rationale

Sharing statistics, trends, and real-time information with the public helps to bring a joint problem solving effort and transparency to local problems. Reporting out to community in these areas would help to build transparency and rebuild trust factors throughout the community. Note: CHP has a model that collects and distributes similar data to the public.

Resources needed

SO has indicated they have acquired a data collection tool. After determining the information required from the public, SO staff will need to extract data of importance to the community and report back.

- D. Recommend that LEAs partner with CBOs to conduct biannual community surveys on the level of police services satisfaction, information on interest to the community, and follow up with the community to report back on the results on top identified items and plans to address them. LEAs should work with CBOs to develop the survey, analyze results, and provide feedback to the public. Plans should be developed to address identified areas of need.

Rationale

It's important to conduct periodic surveys of the community on satisfaction of LEA services to assess progress and identify areas of need.

Resources needed

Law enforcement agencies staff works with community-based organizations to develop and distribute survey, and works to analyze results and work on a plan for identified needs. Law enforcement agencies staff and community-based organizations contract/partnership. Note: SSU has data analysis students that can take on this project.

- E. Recommend that specific, successful community policing programs and activities performed by LEAs or in partnership with CBOs be recognized as an Upstream Investment and listed on the website, so that the public, LEAs, CBOs and other interested parties can learn about successful LEA programs, partnerships, and activities that produce positive outcomes.

Rationale

Highlighting successful community policing activities and programs will help to recognize and bring attention to the positive efforts of LEAs and partners.

Reference: Upstream Investments; this recommendation would meet the goals of (1) the whole community is engaged in the healthy development of children and (2) all community members are well sheltered, safe, and socially supported.

Resources needed

Training SO staff on Upstream Investments and how to identifying and submit applications to the program.

- F. Recommend that LEAs increase the duration of beat assignments to allow for a better connection between the LEO and the assigned community.

Rationale

LEOs who spend a significant amount of time within an assigned community are able to connect and engage with residents.

Resources needed

No resources needed; bid assignment policy change.

- G. Recommend that LEA develop an effective transition plan to pass on local knowledge and connections when transferring LEOs between beat assignments.

Rationale

There is value to transitioning important information and introducing new officers to meet the residents and learning about their new area from the previous officer.

Resources needed

Extended time, about a week, for two officers on a beat to transition necessary information from previous to new officer.

- H. Recommend that LEO increase their foot and bike patrol time in neighborhoods, especially in the five affected neighborhoods identified in the Portrait of Sonoma.

Rationale

The community would be better served by patrol officers being more accessible in neighborhoods, walking or bike riding, when possible. The communities identified in Portrait of Sonoma as high need communities are also high crime areas and the neighborhood would benefit from a higher police presence. For example: The Moorland Neighborhood Action Plan revealed the residents of the neighborhood listed an increased police presence in their neighborhood as one of the highest priorities. Other similar communities may want the same police presence. Reference: Moorland Neighborhood Action Plan and Portrait of Sonoma.

Resources needed

Purchase of bicycles and related safety equipment.

- I. Recommend that LEA consider assigning bilingual/bicultural LEOs where appropriate and provide bilingual services when needed.

Rationale

In order to adequately serve the community, bilingual needs should be considered when assigning officers to 'beats.'

Resources needed

Hiring of more bilingual officers to accommodate needs of monolingual community.

Timeline/implementation recommendation

Pending.

Performance indicator(s)

Pending.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

Pending.

DRAFT

Recommendation #4

Develop a Moorland Neighborhood Pilot Project [DRAFT]

Summary

These recommendations focus on creating a community policing, outreach and engagement plan, developed and agreed upon by residents and law enforcement, in the Moorland area in Southwest Santa Rosa. This project will serve to build trust, reduce crime and improve the quality of life of Moorland neighborhood residents. It will also act as a pilot project that may be replicated in other priority areas in the County.

Brief Overview of Process

The Community Policing Subcommittee received reports from the Sheriff's Office (SO) and Santa Rosa Police Department (SRPD) about current and past community policing initiatives in the Roseland area. Subcommittee members also attended meetings of the Moorland Healthy Neighborhood initiative, where local residents developed an assessment of the recreation and well-being needs in the Moorland neighborhood, reviewed the County's 2014 *A Portrait of Sonoma County* disparities report, researched existing programs on a local and national level that carry out best practices in community policing and discussed the request of Moorland residents for more law enforcement patrol services and an improved relationship between the Moorland neighborhood and law enforcement with representatives of the SO.

Recommendation

Develop a Moorland Community Policing Plan and Project, as a 5-year pilot, which would include the following elements:

High levels of collaboration with local school resource officers, faith-based organizations, businesses, community-based organizations, and County/City departments and local residents, with the purpose of developing, implementing and supporting the pilot;

Rationale

Stronger partnerships with local stakeholders will lead to greater well-being for residents and a more effective law enforcement presence in the community.

Through a facilitated series of conversations and meetings, development of a public safety plan for the Moorland neighborhood that is agreed upon by residents and law enforcement.

At a minimum, the public safety plan should include: [1] A community safety survey and dialogue that addresses neighborhood issues regarding trust, current neighborhood policing practices, community and law enforcement concerns and

enforcement priorities, and other issues and topics, as agreed upon by participants; [2] regular data collection and reporting regarding the number of traffic and pedestrian stops, interrogations, and arrests categorized by race/ethnicity, age, gender and County trends; [3] regular data collection and reporting regarding other law enforcement topics of interest to the community; [4] a detailed community engagement calendar developed by the LEA and community stakeholders; [5] establishment of a neighborhood council that will assist in implementation of the public safety plan and will assist in providing notice of meetings and distributing information about law enforcement activities in the neighborhood.

Rationale

The creation of the plan and implementation of its goals will result in methods for readily sharing information about crime, police operations and social issues in the neighborhood. Long-term assignment of deputies will lead to expertise and trust that promotes trust and problem solving.

Assignment of two deputies to the Moorland for a minimum of five years each. The deputies will be tasked with identifying and solving neighborhood law enforcement issues and concerns, getting to know and establishing relationships with neighborhood residents, leaders and local organizations, and leading local engagement efforts on behalf of their agencies.

Dedicated offices in or near the neighborhood with phone and web access where law enforcement officers can conduct work and schedule meetings with local stakeholders;

Rationale

Moorland neighborhood residents have very recently requested increased Sheriff's Department patrol services in their neighborhood and that CALLE participate in an effort to improve the relationship between residents and law enforcement (see attached Moorland Health Neighborhood Project summary). Increasing Neighborhood policing practices will result in decentralization in the command structure and decision-making

Resources needed

Two full-time deputies with full access to resources (patrol cars, bikes etc.) and with specialized training in community policing practices. Office space in neighborhood; preferably at a local school or community-based organization.

The deputies must have at least 5 years of experience in the SO, be bilingual (Spanish/English), have attended cultural diversity trainings, and be active with a local CBO as a Board Member or dedicated volunteer. The public safety plan will specify the percentage of daylight shifts that each deputy will patrol on foot or bicycle in the Moorland neighborhood.

In collaboration with local stakeholder, creation of neighborhood youth oriented events not related to policing. Such activities could include annual recreational and sporting events, volunteer service projects, and local school and educational engagement projects such as the United Way's Schools of Hope.

Monthly neighborhood meetings between LE and community to review data and neighborhood issues and concerns. The neighborhood deputies shall arrange monthly meetings with residents and appropriate CBO and County and City department representatives. (The first few meetings should be facilitated).

Development of a youth police academy or other youth-oriented policing project and increased outreach and facilitation of adult ride-alongs. The purpose of these activities will be for local residents to gain a better understanding of the work of local law enforcement agencies and to facilitate increased communications between the community and law enforcement officers.

Creation of a local advisory board similar to the "El Protector" Program in Nashville Tennessee (see attached document).

Rationale

Law enforcement agencies are given the responsibility and power to use force against citizens and to detain and arrest. The community and neighborhoods should be full partners in the exercise of this vast power. To do this, a pilot project in the Moorland neighborhood will enable the neighborhood and law enforcement (SO and SRPD). To gain expertise in building trust and developing a neighborhood specific public safety plan. The safety of the neighborhood's residents will be improved.

Many residents in the Moorland neighborhood do not have experience seeking enhanced or improved government and police services. Hence, the concentration of resources is necessary in order to build the trust and expertise necessary to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood.

Timeline/implementation recommendation

- Ninety days to recruit and place two deputies
- Six months to develop neighborhood/ SO public safety plan.

Performance indicator(s)

1.1 Reduction in calls for service and crime, including violent crime, in the Moorland area.

1.2 Increase in trust and satisfaction with LE.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

It was assumed that the Moorland area would not want any increase in the presence of the SO in the Moorland area due to Andy Lopez's death. But the neighborhood ranked increased patrols, combined with improvement in the relationship between the area and the SO as the highest priorities in addressing the recreation and well-being needs of the area. See Moorland recreation and well-being plan.

DRAFT

Recommendation #5

Improve Hiring, Training and Cultural Diversity

[DRAFT]

Summary

The Community Policing subcommittee found it necessary through our investigations of current practices to include recommendations focusing on law enforcement agency (LEA) hiring and training.

In order to begin to instill trust that has been lacking in certain communities between the residents and local law enforcement agencies (LEAs), the Community Policing subcommittee strongly recommends that local LEAs commit to a broad and effective Community Policing philosophy with significant and meaningful involvement from the communities they serve. In keeping with the Community Policing philosophy, the subcommittee also strongly recommends that all local LEAs make additional efforts to hire and maintain staff that are reflective demographically, culturally, and linguistically of the communities they serve.

Brief Overview of Process

In the development of this recommendation, the Community Policing subcommittee received several reports and testimonies from local LEAs regarding their current hiring and training practices; particularly around issues of cultural diversity and representations, that went towards informing the recommendations below.

The subcommittee also received a report from the Sonoma County Human Resources Department regarding the current demographic make-up of the County's workforce, including the Sheriff's Office (see attached HR report).

The subcommittee also took into consideration in developing this recommendation comments made by community members during Task Force and subcommittee meetings and community engagement events, as well as the testimony of family members involved in critical incidents in the County.

While the committee did not feel it had the expertise to evaluate the effectiveness of the current POST Diversity training requirements, we do believe that LEAs should be proactive in enhancing their training around cultural diversity and sensitivity; particularly in light of recent concerns from several communities.

Recommendation

- A. Establish a training program that focuses on Community Policing. Critical elements of the Community Policing model should include the fostering of partnerships between LEAs and communities to develop strategies to promote greater public

safety and the adoption of a problem solving approach to identify and effectively address underlying conditions that give rise to crime and disorder.

- B. Recruit, hire, train and promote individuals with stronger backgrounds in community engagement and volunteering, and involve the community in these decision-making processes.
- C. Develop and implement enhanced training efforts with focus on community policing activities including community involvement and input into the curriculum.
- D. Develop stronger collaboration between the SO and County Human Resources to identify and provide Spanish language training programs for non-native Spanish speaking patrol officers; and explore Spanish language immersion programs for patrol officers, including incentivizing Spanish language learning for non-native speakers.
- E. Recommend that the SO work with County Human Resources and topic experts (eg. sociologists, psychologists, etc) to identify and enhance training around unconscious bias for SO staff.
- F. Enhance cultural diversity and responsiveness training beyond current POST requirements, with community involvement and input in the development and delivery of the training and curriculum. Training should be developed with emphasis on local issues and multiculturalism.
- G. Recommend that Community Policing Model shall be structured to withstand budgetary fluctuations.

Rationale

The killing of a 13 year old Latino youth in our community has forced us to look at what kind of community we want to be and how can we, as a community, work to ensure that similar tragedies never happen again.

Community policing, which instills a partnership between the communities and SO may have prevented this unnecessary tragedy. Our community is and should be a partner with the SO. As partners and together, the SO and community needs to be viewed as problem solvers

Resources needed

Sufficient staff to ensure the training and implementation of this recommendation.

Timeline/implementation recommendation

Within 60 days of this board approved recommendation the Training Program for Community Policing implemented. Within 90 days of this recommendation the SO will begin training current staff in Community Policing

Performance indicator(s)

Pending.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

Pending.

DRAFT

Recommendation #6

Enhance Alternative Use of Force Practices [DRAFT]

Summary

The use of deadly force by law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in Sonoma County is of deep concern to many of the communities they serve. In several instances over the past decade, events where deadly force has been used have had a deep eroding effect on the trust between communities and law enforcement.

Updating and clearly defining use of force policies, along with better equipping officers to handle high-stress situations in a safe and non-lethal manner where deadly force may be an option, is one way to begin to rebuild trust in communities and to prevent further tragedies from occurring.

The Community Policing subcommittee recommends that local law enforcement agencies (LEAs) maintain high-level, quality service; to ensure officer safety, accountability, and effective policing.

Brief Overview of Process

The Community Policing subcommittee received reports and presentations from the Sheriff's Office (SO) on their current use of force policies and procedures and a presentation from a San Francisco State professor on 'unconscious bias.' We also received information from the Salt Lake City, UT and Seattle, WA Police Departments regarding their use of force policies; and considered the findings and recommendations of the US Department of Justice's (DOJ) recent report on the Albuquerque, NM Police Departments. Additionally, the subcommittee members reviewed recent publications regarding de-escalation practices, bias-free training, and material received from the NACOLE 2014 conference. Subcommittee members also took into account the testimonies of families of victims involved in recent deadly use of force incidents in the County.

Recommendations

- A. Recommend that local LEAs adopt a use of force policy that is aligned with the recent Albuquerque, NM and Seattle, WA models (see attached use of force policies).

Rationale

The model provided has been developed in partnership with the DOJ and represents national best practices.

- B. Recommend that LEAs work to investigate and implement increased training efforts that focus on improving de-escalation practices, advanced mediation/communication techniques, and other state-of-the-art communications training that work to resolve and reduce conflict when dealing with the public.

Rationale

Recent events on a local and national level, have highlighted the need to look at methods of de-escalation and alternatives to use of force.

- C. Recommend that LEA explore and administer training and policies that focus on unintentional bias, which goes hand-in-hand with de-escalation. Encourage local LEA relationship with DOJ to determine and implement best practices for local departments on bias-free policing and de-escalation.

Rationale

DOJ and other police agencies around the country have found that focusing on training that looks at how unintentional bias affects police work and de-escalation techniques and practices help to build trust in communities.

- D. Recommend the implementation of a program similar to San Francisco Police Departments (SFPD) model that offers restorative practices and strategies that includes conflict resolution and has been demonstrated to reduce the number of complaints from the public.

Rationale

If the public has restorative resources available to them, they are more apt to understand the process and options they have in law enforcement encounters. They would be able to have a face-to-face meeting, similar to SFPD model, once a policy is in place to exercise this option.

- E. Recommend that LEA take a proactive versus reactive response to solving community problems such as initiating community meetings, surveys, and outreach, in partnership with appropriate CBOs, up to and including a review for possible revisions of LEA policies and practices.

Rationale

The DOJ has found some LEAs to have a “pattern and practice of taking immediate offensive action” rather than acting within the bounds of the Constitution, with many officers not displaying the “thick skin and patience” required for the job. It would be constructive for local LEAs to look at their policies and practices for revisions that would encourage another way of approaching law enforcement within communities. It’s vital after a controversial incident that the LEA respond proactively by initiating community meetings with the appropriate County departments and CBOs.

- F. Recommend that County staff research, review, and implement cost-effective methods for improving the quality of deadly force training and alternate use of force; factors that may lead to proper or improper use of force are leadership, policy, training, and/or fear.

Rationale

We want officers and citizens alike to be safe in the community. An in depth public review of factors affecting the use of force will help educate and promote public trust.

- G. Recommend that the SO and other LEAs work closely with the County Administrator's Office and community-based organizations to ensure effective partnering to establish community policing policies and practices. Additionally, the Community Policing model shall be structured to withstand budgetary fluctuations.

Rationale

It is important to have LEA develop and maintain strategic community partnerships with CBOs who serve the community at large, especially residents in underrepresented communities, such as the *A Portrait of Sonoma County* priority areas.

- H. Recommend an independent community-wide assessment of the attitudes, policy, preparedness, and response to law enforcement encounters, followed by an analysis to further recommend changes or added policies, training, or best practices.

Rationale

The community, including specific neighborhoods, and the SO needs objective data regarding current practices, to determine if there are areas for improvement.

- I. Recommend that LEAs review their Field Training Officer (FTO) program to ensure appropriate training (such as the value of relationships with all communities, best community policing practices, etc.) to new hires, FTO trainer selection (with a focus on officers with experience with Community Policing practices, community engagement and relations, etc.), as well as modern evaluation standards for new officers that are based on Community Policing principles.

Rationale

The importance of infusing Community Policing principles at all levels of law enforcement is especially important, with new hires or those new to our community. Selecting FTOs that demonstrate successful level of community policing practice is important in starting new hires in the right direction.

- J. Recommend that LEA implement supervisor training on managing deadly force encounters and investigations.

Rationale

A review of how current critical incident investigations are conducted internally should be reviewed to determine if updates to the process are needed.

- K. Recommend that LEA and CBO(s) partner to research and implement training that focuses on LEO and community fears, distrust, feelings of harassment, etc. to improve understanding between LEOs and the community, specifically, underrepresented communities.

Rationale

Managing fears, educating about community, and law enforcement roles will minimize fear within the community and is a powerful approach to reducing deadly force encounters. This training works both ways, where LEOs and community members need to learn about the fears that affect community policing and keep partners from finding solutions.

- L. Recommend that local LEAs move from “command and control” model to a community-based “police service”.

Rationale

This community-based model builds trust with the community to find solutions.

- M. Recommend that SO create a permanent Community Affairs Division with sworn and civilian staff to effectively develop, implement, and manage outreach, partnerships, neighborhood, and other community engagement programs.

Rationale

The SO needs an effective and dedicated community relations division to develop and maintain the strongest community partnerships and relationships to build trust and to reduce hostility when controversial incidents occur.

Resources needed

- Start up training cost to train every sworn officer on new policy.
- Partnership with DOJ and training funds for enhanced de-escalation, mediation, and communication training. Possibly, an internal position, such as an ASO that focuses on the specific training recommended by the task force, including partnering with CBOs, DOJ, and others to determine the best training recommended by the task force. Budget may include funds for CBO’s work on mediation/training.
- Partnership with DOJ and training funds for identification and administration of training focusing on unintentional bias and de-escalation practices.

Timeline/implementation recommendation

Within 60 days of Board approval, the LEA and related partners will engage in a plan to research, develop timelines, implement plan, manage program, and report feedback to Board on progress at periodic timeframes.

Use of Force Policy model should be implemented within 90 days.

Performance indicator(s)

- Increased, effective, and safe use of de-escalation methods and techniques.
- Increased public trust in law enforcement.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

Pending.

DRAFT

Recommendation #7

Improve Hiring Practices [DRAFT]

Summary

The County's Workforce Diversity Report on law enforcement employees demonstrates that the current patrol deputy workforce does not reflect the communities they serve. Latinos in the County are estimated at 30%, in some communities the percentage is higher. The report indicated a significant underutilization of Latinos and women. For example, the percentage of Latinos in other law enforcement job classifications in the County is between 16.7% and 23.1%, but the Deputy Sheriff (patrol) has a Latino percentage of 9.5%. It is recommended that all levels of law enforcement staff should be more representative of the current demographics in Sonoma County.

The hiring process should also take into consideration community relations, community policing, and other aspects that would help identify patrol and other staff that have demonstrated and continue to elevate community relations, community policing practices, and working with community based organizations.

Brief Overview of Process

The Community Policing subcommittee received reports and presentations from Human Resources and law enforcement agencies on their hiring and promotional process, workforce diversity, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (EEO). The workforce diversity report revealed that the Sheriff's Office is one of two departments that hires Latinos at a lower rate than other departments.

Recommendation

It is imperative that law enforcement agencies hire from the communities served and that the workforce mirror the populations/demographics served. Law enforcement agencies (LEAs) should recruit, hire, train and promote in order to build the strongest commitment to community policing. Additionally, LEAs should increase efforts for bilingual and bicultural recruitments.

In order to establish a law enforcement work force that is culturally diverse and representative of the community in which they serve the Community Policing subcommittee:

- A. Recommend SO hire an HR Consultant to focus on Latino outreach efforts to recruit an increased pool of candidates for the SO's Deputy Sheriff (patrol) recruitments and promotions.

Rationale

There needs to be an intentional plan to recruit a more diverse patrol workforce. The community expects a better representation.

- B. Recommend support for the County’s Equal Employment Opportunity Plan with the goal of hiring more Latinos and women through the implementation of the objectives and goals.

Rationale

There is a need for the law enforcement agencies to reflect the population served, therefore requiring an increase in the number of Latino and women patrol officers, including bilingual/bicultural skills. The US Department of Justice issued an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan dated March 7, 2012, which highlighted the underutilization of Latinos and women in sworn patrol positions, therefore supporting the recommendation that the Sheriff’s Office increase the number of Latino and women officers in their patrol ranks. These recommendations are specific to recruitments of patrol deputies. The Corrections Division is mandated to keep levels of women correctional officers to meet the needs of their female inmate population.

- C. Recommend the Sheriff’s Office implement an “in-house” training and education program that will foster and encourage existing underrepresented population staff to apply for opportunities as Deputy Sheriff (patrol) positions.

Rationale

Sheriff’s Office has a high number of Latinos and women serving in different positions in their office, and even other County employees in typical legal/law enforcement backgrounds in Probation, District Attorney, and other legal environment offices. An internal program targeting Latinos and women would yield an interest among existing staff that could help the pool of candidates.

- D. Recommend the Sheriff’s Office take steps to develop a strong partnership with the SRJC Public Safety Training Center to increase hiring of officers from areas being served. In addition, recommend that the Sheriff’s Office outreach to and encourage local youth to apply for and complete intensive basic academy, and supply information on financing through career training education and other program funds.

Rationale

The SRJC Public Safety Training Center is a valuable asset in the community and many local youth seek out the intensive basic academy with the hope to start a law enforcement career. It’s beneficial for the SO and other LEAs to partner with the Center with the goal of hiring locally, or those from within the community. Similarly, SO and LEA can collaborate with the Center to encourage youth in the community to enter law enforcement careers and share funding information such as CTE, and

other programs. Note: Costs are estimated at \$3,000 for tuition, books, and fees associated with the academy.

- E. Recommend that SO outreach to other law enforcement agencies with high percentage of diverse patrol officers to recruit deputies, and attend job fairs/conventions focusing on Latinos, women, and other diverse groups.

Rationale

There are other agencies with a high number of diverse law enforcement members that SO and local LEAs can recruit from. These officers also have the same basic POST requirements and training, so would benefit the community to bring experienced officers that demonstrate excellence in community relations and community policing.

- F. Recommend improvements to SO's hiring and promotional practices to allow for community input into the process, by including a variety of community partners in the rating, interviewing, and other steps, especially in promotional examinations.

Rationale

Allowing the community to participate in the interview/hiring process would allow for transparency in the process and that the hiring and selection process and panel members be reflective of the community it serves.

- G. Recommend that an HR consultant work with SO and HR to investigate, review, and revise Sheriff's Office outreach and recruitment efforts including the background and final selection process to review for process improvements.

Rationale

A thorough review of the SO outreach and recruitment efforts to include the background and final selection process will help to identify if there are any deficiencies or if processes need to be revised or streamlined; additionally, need to review if there are any steps in the process causing disparate disadvantage to any groups. This can be done through an experienced HR Consultant, police auditor, or other related firm approved through CAO and LEA.

- H. Recommend the SO improve the process to outreach, recruit and hire lateral transfers at the sworn officer management and administrative level who may have successful experience in community relations, community policing, and collaboration with CBOs.

Rationale

To help channel more community relations, community policing atmosphere it is important to hire management level staff that have had success in community relations; many times there may be administrative or sworn level management in other agencies that have successfully demonstrated this experience.

- I. Recommend a review or audit (by a reputable police auditor or private firm) of the internal background process to determine pass rates of diverse groups to determine standards to passing and assess if background contributes to disparate impact in hiring, to include a recommendation on which type of background process would be within POST requirements and conducive to hiring a diverse patrol workforce.

Rationale

The background process may cause disparate impact in hiring of minorities and this may be causing candidates of diverse backgrounds to not be hired in the process. Nationally, the “Ban the Box” initiative has caused employers to review their internal processes to ensure that their background does not cause disparate impact to affected groups. Understandably, law enforcement candidates are excluded from this process due to criminal activity being a disqualifier in most cases. The current background process may still be an obstacle that may inadvertently keep many diverse candidates from being selected for sworn patrol deputy positions, so a thorough, independent review of the background process is necessary to ensure that the background is not causing disparate impact to certain groups.

- J. Recommend SO work with HR Consultant to develop specific interview questions that address the candidates’ experience with community relations, community policing, and collaboration with CBOs and use them for entry and promotional recruitments.

Rationale

Focusing interview questions on community relations/policing with behavioral type questions will help identify candidates that have experience working with diverse communities and how they impact the community at large.

- K. Recommend the development of supplemental questions for promotional exams that focus on the candidates’ ability to relate and engage the community in a positive way, demonstrates their ability to use CBOs in problem solving, and give their responses considerable weight in the process.

Rationale

Adding supplemental questions to promotional exams with emphasis and heavier weight on community relations/policing responses will help identify candidates that go above and beyond in troubleshooting and working with the community on issues.

- L. Recommend developing a process to have members of the community give input into promotional panels. Determine what level would be conducive to have community input and participation and change the process to allow for this.

Rationale

Allowing community members at different steps of the promotional/hiring level, either as raters or panel members will help with transparency and help with providing input from community.

Resources needed

- Budget for HR Consultants including one specializing in diverse recruitments.
- Resources needed to support the County's EEOP.
- Resources to start an internal promotional program; training resources.
- Staff to focus on outreach.
- Budget for a complete audit and reporting.

Timeline/implementation recommendation

Items should be addressed within 60 days of Board approval.

Performance indicator(s)

- The number of Latinos will increase to meet or exceed the percentage of Latinos in other law enforcement job classifications. The number hired will increase incrementally in an amount of at least, 5% each year, until the levels of Latino patrol officers meet or exceed the average of other law enforcement job classifications, which is approximately 19.5% overall. Eventually, the number of Latino patrol deputies should reflect the community served.
- Implementation of changes to background process will yield the number of diverse candidates, without compromising the background requirements.

Additional considerations/alternatives explored

Pending.