The City of New Orleans is not a hard sell for conference coordinators

by Dawn Reynolds, JD, CLEA

But it was a stroke of genius to choose the Big Easy as the site for the seventeenth annual NACOLE conference to be held September 12-15. In addition to the dizzying array of places to get great food and music in and near the beautiful Astor Crowne Plaza hotel, the rich culture and history of New Orleans make it a truly unique American city. From a police oversight perspective, New Orleans affords oversight practitioners the rare opportunity to witness the development of an emerging oversight system. Conference attendees will hear from local community leaders, as well as city and federal authorities, about the many challenges that they face in developing an oversight system and assure the people of New Orleans that their police department is transparent and accountable.

Planning a national conference and building an oversight system that has the ability to meet federal requirements are both difficult tasks. Taking on both these daunting obligations simultaneously has put Susan Hutson, New Orleans’ newly appointed Independent...
THE 2010 NACOLE CONFERENCE in Seattle was a great success, drawing about 230 people from 5 countries, 28 states, Puerto Rico and Washington D.C., and representing 61 cities. I personally appreciated the chance to bring NACOLE to Seattle and know that the community benefited from the chance to participate in the event. The learning and networking opportunities presented by the annual conference are important for all of us involved with civilian oversight and planning for the conference is central to the work of the NACOLE Board of Directors.

The NACOLE Board recognizes that members are working hard in their respective jurisdictions to ensure that law enforcement is held accountable to the public and transparent in its operation. In turn, the Board is committed to finding ways it can enhance its support of the membership.

The Board held its mid-winter meeting in New Orleans in late January 2011. We brought in a consultant to help us work through our priorities for the coming year, with a focus on sustaining the organization and its membership. I am continually impressed with the commitment Board Members demonstrate to serving the organization and thought it would be useful to share with the membership information about Board structure and functions.

The Board has nine committees: Finance, Newsletter, Website, Membership Development & Outreach, Strategic Planning, Professional Standards, Best Practices, and Conference Planning. Each Board Member chairs a committee or fills another Board role, such as Treasurer. We hold monthly Board meetings and Committee Chairs provide updates on the work of their group. Many members currently serve on one or more committees, or have done so in the past.

Your service to the organization through committee involvement is invaluable in keeping NACOLE’s mission moving forward.

The Finance Committee is chaired by Ainsley Cromwell who works with the Treasurer, Marcos Soler, to ensure that the Board is meeting its fiscal responsibilities to NACOLE. Yearly income and expenses are over $100,000, largely due to registration and costs associated with the annual conference. We anticipate a surplus of around $4,000 by the end of 2011, adding to the $70,000 on hand as of December 31, 2010.

Pierce Murphy chairs the Newsletter Committee. He works with his committee to solicit ideas for articles and identifies people willing to write, edit and do all of the other organization required to publish a newsletter two times a year. I know we all agree that the NACOLE Review is consistently informative and relevant to our efforts in enhancing police accountability.

The Website Committee is chaired by Jayson Wechter. A new website designer was retained and is planning a number of significant improvements, including the migration of the listserv to the website, an update of website content and appearance, and integration of new media capabilities. We’re also discussing tiered access to the website, adding additional content accessible to members only.

The Membership Development & Outreach Committee is chaired by Karen Williams. She and the committee are building on work done previously to organize information about everyone who contacts NACOLE for assistance as a means to network and solicit new members. The committee is also reaching out to those who have dropped their NACOLE membership to encourage them to return. The committee has updated outreach materials and is finalizing a NACOLE brochure.

Phil Eure chairs the Strategic Planning Committee, which submitted two grants this past year. Neither grant was funded but we received constructive feedback that will be incorporated into future applications. The committee will continue to explore partnerships with academic institutions and is reaching out to foundations to build relationships and seek funding opportunities. Funding may be sought for specific projects, such as peer auditing, a NACOLE member exchange program, or support for regional meetings.

Ilana Rosenzweig and Brian Buchner co-chair the Professional Standards Committee. Previous newsletters have discussed the significant accom-
Police Assessment Resource Center's National Guidelines for Police Monitors

by Merrick Bobb

On November 1, 2009, PARC formally presented its monitoring guidelines to the general public at the NACOLE annual conference in Austin, Texas. The guidelines are the culmination of several years of work to bring together the civilian oversight community, monitors, and law enforcement in a consensus on basic guidelines for civilian oversight by monitors and others. The guidelines cover the full panoply of ethical, practical, and technical aspects of oversight. They provide guidance to civilian review boards, auditors, police commissions, monitors, and law enforcement agencies subject to civilian oversight, with particular emphasis on monitoring. These guidelines were prepared pursuant to a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) of the United States Department of Justice.

Since the early 1990s, police monitors have become increasingly common. In the litigation context, monitors report on compliance by law enforcement with voluntary settlements and court-ordered police reform. In the context of municipal governance, monitors perform or review investigations of alleged police misconduct.

The guidelines also attempt to respond to the need of police executives for greater precision and clarity about monitoring. Just as monitors’ reports make transparent what before have been opaque police processes, these guides provide greater transparency and predictability for police executives struggling to understand how their law enforcement agencies will be judged and evaluated under monitoring. The guidelines attempt to provide a common language, lexicon, and measuring stick. They are one part of an effort to establish the foundations for an emerging profession—monitoring of law enforcement agencies.

Police monitoring, a profession unknown until the early 1990s, has grown rapidly in various parts of the United States. Some monitors were appointed at the instance of federal, state, and local government and private plaintiffs as part of settlements of civil rights litigation and will be identified in this document as “litigation-initiated monitors.” These monitors typically serve for a fixed period, generally five to seven years, to report upon compliance with consent decrees and other settlement agreements. These appointments end upon dissolution of the consent decree or by agreement of the parties and hence are temporary, as distinct from permanent, police oversight functions.

In recent years, the COPS Office realigned priorities in 2011

by Brian Buchner

The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), under the leadership of Director Bernard K. Melekian, has adopted new priorities for 2011 to facilitate the development of innovative community policing approaches for advancing public safety in this changing and challenging new economy. Law enforcement is not immune to the changing economic climate, and for the first time in recent history, police officers around the country are being laid off along with their civilian counterparts. To better support law enforcement agencies and advance public safety in this new economy, the COPS Office is improving the integration of community policing principles into their grant programs. To that end, Director Melekian met with public safety leaders, elected officials and community members across the United States to identify the most immediate public safety issues facing law enforcement and communities today. As a result of these meetings, COPS Office grants in the upcoming year will target problems ranging from policing in rural areas, to gang violence and homeland security. This realignment of priorities and funding further supports the COPS Office’s mission to advance public safety through community policing by emphasizing the importance of building relationships and solving problems.

The importance of building relationships and problem solving between law enforcement and communities to public safety and crime control has been demonstrated in study after study, including COPS Office supported research. Research also shows that mutual trust and respect are critical in building collaborative working relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve, and that a culture of police integrity is essential in building that mutual trust and respect. The COPS Office, through its Police Integrity Initiative, has been committed to promoting police integrity since 1996, and in that time, has supported programs in cities large and small that seek to build trust between law enforcement and communities. In fact, the overall goal of the Police Integrity Initiative is to meet emerging and changing law enforcement needs by assisting agencies in creating or strengthening local programs.

To bring national attention to the importance of developing a culture of police integrity and collaborative working relationships between law enforcement and communities, the COPS Office sponsored the first National Symposium on Police Integrity, and also organized the U.S. Department of Justice’s Conference on Police-Community Relationships. These efforts resulted in the COPS Office’s commitment to research and program development in the effective use of early intervention systems, citizen complaint investigations, mediation programs, use-of-force policies, and the means to address racial profiling. In addition, the COPS Office has worked in partnership with law enforcement associations and other interested stakeholders to produce resources to assist agencies in developing and strengthening their own integrity programs.

On August 1 & 2, the COPS Office will host the National Community Policing Conference in Washington, D.C., featuring workshops, plenary sessions, and activities that highlight innovative community policing approaches for advancing public safety in the new economy.

More information about the COPS Office, including funding opportunities and links to community policing research, training and other resources, can be found on its website, www.cops.usdoj.gov.

Brian Buchner is a Special Investigator with the Los Angeles Police Commission, Office of the Inspector General and a member of the NACOLE Board of Directors.

by Jayson Wechter

INVESTIGATIONS OF OFFICER-INVOLVED shootings are laborious attempts to understand events whose critical component—the discharge of one or more firearms—unfolded in seconds. Many elements are involved in determining what took place. Lucien Carr, former Technical Director of the Phoenix Police Department laboratory, focuses on the most empirical of those elements, the firearm, in his textbook, Shooting Incident Reconstruction.

In the introduction, Haag quotes a colleague who wrote “The gun is a witness that speaks but once and tells its story with forceful truth to the interpreter who can understand the language.” Haag has spent much of his life studying that language and helping police agencies, prosecutors, defense attorneys and insurance companies understand its meaning.

Reconstruction, he writes, can exclude certain accounts of a shooting incident and support others. It allows eyewitness accounts to be evaluated for accuracy. But it cannot accurately describe every single event in a shooting and is limited by the quality of the available physical evidence. The key to reconstruction is empirical testing: discharging a specific firearm and type of ammunition under controlled conditions and measuring the results, which Haag has been doing for forty years.

Often technical but well illustrated with diagrams and photographs, the book will give police oversight practitioners a better understanding of what crime scene investigators and criminalists can (and perhaps should) do in an officer-involved shooting investigation.

Haag begins by discussing the scientific method: defining the question; forming a hypothesis; gathering and interpreting data; and drawing conclusions. He goes on to describe how to collect, test and interpret firearms evidence, beginning with bullet design and characteristics, and moving through chapters on the evidentiary issues that frequently arise in firearms investigations: assessing the distance from which a firearm was discharged; the effect of projectiles striking and penetrating, or ricocheting or deflecting off materials such as sheet metal, glass, and wood; shooting at or from a vehicle; and cartridge case ejection patterns.

The chapter on bullet track determinations in gunshot victims is an excellent primer for a layperson reviewing an autopsy report. It explains that “wound track” or “wound path” are the accurate descriptive phrases rather than the misused term “trajectory.” It describes “shored” exit wounds, where the skin is supported by a surface such as a wall or the ground. The presence or absence of such wounds has enormous significance in cases with questions about whether a shooting victim was standing or was on the ground. Haag recounts a case where the absence of a shoring exit wound disproved a claim that a police officer fatally shot a supine suspect from above.

In the section on Projectile Penetration and Perforation, he explains that every bullet has a threshold velocity (measured in feet per second, or fps) it must exceed to penetrate a material of a particular thickness. A 9 mm bullet of a specific weight must be travelling between 100 and 150 fps (the velocity that can be achieved with a sling-shot) to penetrate 5/8 inch thick sheetstock, but over 600 fps to penetrate .032 inch sheet metal (the thickness of the 22-gauge steel used on most motor vehicles).

The chapter on shooting of vehicles will be particularly useful for agencies investigating or reviewing such incidents. There is often far more physical evidence in these cases and the laws of physics, which Haag describes in detail, play a larger role in the investigation.

The book’s appendix includes a checklist of “vehicle data and measurements” for vehicle shooting incidents that every crime scene unit and call-out team should be familiar with. Haag recommends that vehicle photographs should include a known frame of reference, such as a plumb bob or a surveyor’s rod, or the placement of an inclinometer at various locations on the vehicle. The inclinometer can also be used to measure the slope of the roadway surface. The positions of the tires and the ground beneath them should be marked so they can be repositioned later and so investigators can return to the scene knowing the vehicle’s exact location.

The position of seats and windows and of the shifting lever and the parking brake (all of which can be changed by emergency responders) should be documented and paramedics should be promptly questioned about any changes they made to seat or seatback positions. Haag emphasizes that these matters, and many others he describes, may seem unimportant at the incident scene but may become highly relevant later on as various investigations and possible litigation unfolds.

Jayson Wechter is a member of the NACOLE Board of Directors and an investigator at the San Francisco Office of Citizen Complaints.

NACOLE Revises Awards Process

By Jayson Wechter

NACOLE HAS REVISED ITS procedures for bestowing awards that recognize contributions to and accomplishments in the field of civilian oversight. In 2011 we are initiating a clearly defined and transparent process relying on nominations from the NACOLE membership for two categories of awards:

- The NACOLE Flame Award, recognizing significant, long-term contributions to the field of police oversight.
- The NACOLE Achievement in Oversight / Contribution to Oversight Award, recognizing a specific significant accomplishment or contribution to civilian oversight by an individual, organization or agency.

We have established specific evaluation criteria for each award. Nominations can be made by any NACOLE member and will be evaluated by an awards sub-committee of the NACOLE Professional Standards Committee, which will include past recipients of NACOLE awards.

The nomination form (which must be submitted electronically) will allow statements from up to three individuals supporting the nomination and can include relevant supporting documents. June 10, 2011 is the deadline to submit nominations for this year’s awards.

A description of both awards and the criteria for evaluating nominations will soon be available on the NACOLE website, www.NACOLE.org.

Jayson Wechter, a member of the NACOLE Board of Directors, led the working group that drafted the new NACOLE awards procedures.
How the New York City CCRB Provides Access in Other Languages

By: Marcos Soler, Ph.D.

H ow does a civilian oversight agency provide all people with meaningful access programs, services and activities, regardless of their proficiency in English? This is a question that oversight practitioners face every time a civilian with limited English proficiency (“LEP”) files a complaint or an agency representative speaks at a community forum attended by immigrant groups and LEP residents. Although this is a common question, the answer is rarely uniform.

In this article, I describe how the Civilian Complaint Review Board of the City of New York (CCRB) moved from an informal practice of handling LEP complaints to a formalized, agency-wide “language access” plan (“LAP”). My goal is to share our experience, illustrate how external and internal factors affected our ability to manage change, and discuss the end result – the CCRB’s Language Access Plan.

Since 1993 the CCRB has had an informal language access “policy.” The CCRB made it a priority to hire staff who were able to speak a variety of languages. If a complainant spoke a language that our staff did not speak, we provided an interpreter free of charge. A language line provided phone translation to our callers. Brochures and other documents were occasionally translated. Complaint forms and contact letters were available in Spanish because of the high volume of Spanish speaking complainants.

At some point, this informal practice proved to be insufficient. One reason was the changing legal landscape. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits agencies that receive federal funds from discriminating against persons on the basis of race, color or national origin. Building upon this foundation, in August of 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13166 requiring federal agencies to examine the services they provide to those with limited-English proficiency.

Executive Order 13166 also mandated federal-fund agencies to take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to the recipient’s programs. To assist both federal agencies and federally-funded agencies in carrying out these responsibilities, in 2002 the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued LEP Guidance. The Guidance set forth the compliance standards that federal agencies and recipients of federal assistance must follow to ensure that their programs and activities normally provided in English were accessible to LEP persons. The City of New York, along with many other local and state jurisdictions, has many programs that receive federal assistance – including law enforcement initiatives – and hence, these programs have an obligation to comply with Order 13166.

There were three other factors that prompted the CCRB to design a more comprehensive language access plan. The first was demographics. New York is a city of immigrants. Forty-seven percent of all residents five years old and over speak a language other than English at home. Twenty-five percent of City residents have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. The second factor was local legislation that added new obligations to City agencies. In 2008, the Mayor signed Executive Order 120 which requires that all City agencies providing direct public services ensure meaningful access to such services by taking reasonable steps to develop and implement agency-specific language assistance plans for LEP persons. Finally, the City developed a plan, called NYC Simplicity, whose purpose is to make government more customer-focused, innovative, and efficient. Its goal is to spark innovations in service delivery that will enhance quality and accountability, so that all residents, regardless of their English proficiency, can have meaningful access to City programs.

In response to these local factors and changing federal rules, the CCRB developed a formalized language access plan, which is now available on our website (www.nyc.gov/ccrb). The plan was developed using the four-factor analysis outlined by DOJ’s guidance. These factors include the proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population, the frequency of contact, the importance of the benefit, and the resources available to the agency.

As a result, the CCRB is now able to provide essential public documents and services in at least the top six LEP languages spoken by New Yorkers – although in reality we offer services in more languages. For example, we provide training of frontline workers and managers on language access policies and procedures. Also, we post signage in conspicuous locations about the availability of free interpretation services. This includes the dissemination of a user-friendly customer services card referred to as the “I speak card.” The card facilitates the initial interaction between LEP individuals and the agency. In addition, we are in the process of reviewing, updating and translating our brochures and website into Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Russian, Creole, and Italian.

Finally, we have established a monitoring and measurement system regarding the provision of agency language services. Given that each year, on average, the CCRB conducts over 4,500 civilian interviews and has approximately 54,000 instances of telephone contact with the public, we have modified our Complaint Tracking System to better track requests for translation as well as instances in which translation is provided either by staff or outside sources. In short, the new plan integrates the provision of meaningful language into all aspects of our operations, from complaint intake to outreach and public records dissemination.

I would like to conclude with a personal...
“New Orleans,” Continued from page 1

Police Monitor, and her staff to the test. NACOLE is grateful to them for their invitation and commitment to oversight.

Cameron McEllhiney, who serves as NACOLE’s Conference Coordinator, promises that the 2011 conference is shaping up to be a quality event. A familiar face to NACOLE conference attendees, “Camme,” as she is fondly known, has been at the heart of NACOLE conferences and planning since she became involved with the organization in 1999. At that time, she was serving on the Civilian Review Board for the City of Indianapolis when the head of that agency, Chris Reeder, talked her into attending the NACOLE conference held in Kansas City. Ms. McEllhiney continued to attend annual NACOLE conferences and volunteered to help with the 2002 conference. The following year she helped plan the conference in Cambridge, Massachusetts. By 2005, the NACOLE Board realized how valuable Ms. McEllhiney had become and decided to contract with her as the organization’s special projects coordinator. Since then, McEllhiney has worked indefatigably coordinating the planning efforts of the NACOLE Board and those of the host city.

Ms. McEllhiney’s negotiating skills are legendary. Year after year she finds a superb hotel in a central location at a great price and she works out the myriad of logistical arrangements for the organizers and the participants. There are a lot of details, according to McEllhiney. “The columns in a dining room can be an issue. Since networking is such an important part of the conference, there need to be lots of places in the hotel where small groups and friends can meet to discuss matters. The lobby has to be just right since it may be that the most meaningful conversation you have with a member of the oversight community happens between sessions or on your way out to have dinner.” Then there are last minute or unforeseen circumstances, including Hurricane Wilma that caused the 2005 NACOLE conference in Miami to be postponed until December of that year. But it takes more than a mere hurricane to stop the yearly NACOLE gathering.

Attendees come to be reenergized and they come for the material. “For most NACOLE members, this isn’t just a conference, it’s a gathering of the oversight community.” said McEllhiney. “In many ways, we’re more like a family.” McEllhiney assures us that the training sessions and panel discussions this year will be excellent. “There were a record number of proposals—we weren’t able to accept half of them. The schedule reflects the sheer volume of information and the number of learning opportunities that will be available. The first session starts at 8:30 on the first day of the conference. Then it’s back-to-back, concurrent sessions.” Experience tells McEllhiney that this is what people want. “These conferences continue because we are engaged in the same struggles,” she said. “It’s a great place for a conference, but people will be in New Orleans because they are there for oversight.”

Dawn Reynolds is a staff consultant with Elite Performance Auditing Consultants and a member of NACOLE.

“OCCAC,” Continued from page 1

Complaints and bring concerns back to the OCC staff as they arise. Many of the members are active on other boards and commissions, as well as in their neighborhood associations. Currently, the Advisory Council is working on a video that will be subtitled in different languages focusing on how to interact with the police, as well as basic rights that all people have. The members are also responsible for testing the eleven locations where complaints can be filed to ensure that complaint forms are being distributed in a fair and equitable manner and that proper information is being provided to complainants.

“The OCC Advisory Council has been a viable entity for this office because it establishes another tier of accountability for the community and the Department,” states Pearl Fain, Director of the Office of Community Complaints. “Each person on the committee is committed to ensuring that OCC remains fair, impartial, and professional in processing and investigating complaints that are brought before them. Further, the committee enhances the credibility of the office because it encourages extensive outreach, transparency, and accessibility to the community, Department, and Board of Police Commissioners. We are very proud to have a highly informed and dedicated advisory council as partners in all of our oversight duties and responsibilities.” Jim Wanser, the chair of the OCCAC, agrees. “In the five year history of the OCCAC, an important communication link has been established that supports the citizens of Kansas City, the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, and the oversight process of policing. As a diverse group of individuals from diverse communities, we are very pleased with the opportunity of public service that the OCCAC provides.”

If your oversight agency is interested in starting an Advisory Council, please feel free to contact Karen Williams at karen.williams@kcpd.org or (816) 889-6644.

Karen Williams is an analyst with the Kansas City, MO, Office of Community Complaints and a member of the NACOLE Board of Directors.

“President,” Continued from page 2

plishments of this committee, such as the establishment of the NACOLE mentoring program. Lately, the committee has been working to identify the “core competencies” at the heart of civilian oversight and more information on this front will be forthcoming. The conditions for being creden- tialed by NACOLE were recently reviewed and any member who completes the requirements will be designated a “NACOLE Trained Practitioner.”

The Best Practices Committee is an ad hoc committee set up to explore whether NACOLE should move forward to develop standards for the work of member agencies. The committee is chaired by Jayson Wechter and will be focused for the time being on compiling a catalogue of the different oversight agencies in existence with information on their characteristics.

Preparations for our annual conference in New Orleans are well underway. Liana Perez is the Conference Planning Committee Chair and, after receiving many intriguing session proposals, presented a comprehensive plan for the conference when the Board met in New Orleans in January. Each Board Member is responsible for shepherding at least one session, which involves working with the person who proposed the session to develop the panel, select presenters, and prepare handouts.

There are a wide variety of topics planned for the next conference, including a presentation on reconstructing the New Orleans Police Department under a federal consent decree, preserving criminal defendant’s rights while investigating police misconduct, procedural justice, and the duty to report misconduct. For the first time, we will offer an extra half day of sessions focused on basic and advanced investigations,
The core mission of the litigation-initiated monitor is to assess and evaluate whether the law enforcement agency in question is in compliance with a Settlement Agreement. Settlement Agreements usually require substantial compliance to be maintained for two years before the monitoring period can come to an end. The court will likely consider whether implementation is ameliorating unconstitutional conduct and leading to the sustained maintenance of constitutional policing.

MUNICIPAL ACTION MONITORS
Monitors appointed pursuant to voluntary municipal action usually will not have a settlement agreement to chart their mission; nonetheless, in common with litigation-initiated monitors, these monitors must assess the police department’s performance as required by the governing ordinance or municipal code from which they derive their authority and with reference to accepted standards and best practice in law enforcement. The core mission of these monitors typically is to provide ongoing assurance that internal investigations by law enforcement are thorough, fair, and unbiased and that police practices in this regard are transparent. Some monitors have the ability to conduct or direct independent investigations, as in Denver and Los Angeles, for example. Municipal action monitors vary in their power to make or recommend adjudications or disciplinary decisions.

Local ordinances, municipal code provisions, or executive orders appointing monitors are generally less explicitly prescriptive than Settlement Agreements and are designed to build mutual trust and cooperation between the police and the community and foster greater transparency, integrity, and accountability by the police. Local monitors are usually appointed for an undefined term and have a broader mandate. Local monitors engage in one or more of the following tasks:

- review completed internal investigations for thoroughness, fairness, and completeness;
- participate in ongoing internal investigations or perform independent investigations, in part through issuance of subpoenas and the holding of public hearings if permitted by law; engage as an ombudsman, mediator, or facilitator of dialogue, communication, mutual understanding, and cooperation between the police and the community;
- perform audits as required by Settlement Agreements or local law;
- identify systemic issues impacting the integrity, fairness, and effectiveness of internal procedures to identify and deal with corruption, excessive force, dishonesty, and constitutional or statutory violations by the police; and
- make recommendations and issue uncensored public reports about the foregoing.

MEASURING COMPLIANCE AND CHANGE
Federal, state, and local Settlement Agreements and municipal ordinances require substantial changes in police department policies, training, analytical rigor, accountability, performance, attitude, approach to discipline, and culture. They require that data be created, carefully analyzed, and actively utilized by police management to put an end to an alleged pattern or practice and to better manage the risk of police misconduct. A monitor’s report at regular intervals charts progress toward that end.

Thus, in addition to informing the federal court and the parties, the monitors’ reports assist policymakers, opinion makers, and the general public in becoming conversant and capable of reaching informed judgments about the performance of law enforcement.

Litigation-initiated monitors themselves are not so much change agents but rather serve to measure the degree to which implementation and compliance bring about change. To do so, a monitor must find ways and tests that measure the fact and the pace of change. Monitors appointed by municipal ordinance, on the other hand, may indeed serve as change agents, particularly where the monitor has a direct role in the investigation of a police officer or in the adjudicatory and disciplinary proceedings that follow.

Merrick Bobb is Executive Director of PARC and Special Counsel to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

“CCRB,”
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thought. I think the lack of standardization that we see today in the area of language access across oversight bodies will soon be subject to change. As with many other aspects of our operations, I expect that the demand for basic standards and good practices will soon arrive to all jurisdictions. As a result, the need for shared learning will heighten and, in this sense, NACOLE is well positioned to provide assistance to its members by sharing good practices through its many programs and activities.

Marcos Soler is the Treasurer of NACOLE and a member of its Board of Directors. He also serves as Director of Research and Strategic Initiatives for the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB).
Scenes from the 2010 Seattle Conference

Join us in New Orleans!
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