

NACOLE Review

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

www.nacole.org

Spring 2010

SEATTLE TO HOST 16th ANNUAL NACOLE CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 20th-23rd

By Cameron McElhiney

NACOLE WILL PRESENT ITS 16TH Annual Conference, *Promoting Excellence*, September 20th -- 23rd at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel in Seattle, Washington. This year we are very fortunate to be working with Kathryn Olson, Director of the Seattle Police Department Office of Professional Accountability. Ms. Olson's office and the City of Seattle have already gone above and beyond to ensure that we will not only feel welcome in their wonderful city but will be producing one of our best conferences to date.

NACOLE is proud of its tradition of providing members of the oversight community with a

forum to exchange information and share experiences. This year's conference will continue this tradition by offering a wide range of workshops dealing with the issues we encounter every day when dealing with civilian oversight of law enforcement. Topics such as workplace retaliation, critical incident response, off-duty misconduct and stakeholder outreach will join workshops exploring basic investigative skills, mediation, and issues surrounding the use of force.

Because of the overwhelming response over the past two years, we will continue our Training Certificate Program, initiated in 2008, which recognizes the participation in conference training workshops by attendees. In addition, we will continue our Certified

forum to exchange information and share experiences. This year's conference will continue this tradition by offering a wide range of workshops dealing with the issues we encounter every day when dealing with civilian oversight of law enforcement. Topics such as workplace retaliation, critical incident response, off-duty misconduct and stakeholder outreach will join workshops exploring basic investigative skills, mediation, and issues surrounding the use of force.



Aerial view of the Seattle skyline, flanked by Puget Sound on one side and the Cascade Mountains on the other, while a Washington State Ferry makes its way across Puget Sound.

Photo: Tim Thompson

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Oversight Developments Spotlight: Southern California

By Brian Buchner

RECENTLY, THERE HAVE BEEN A number of important developments in police oversight in Southern California, including the establishment of an Independent Auditor in Fresno. There are three particularly noteworthy developments in Burbank, Inglewood and San Diego.

The City of Burbank has hired former U.S. Attorney in Los Angeles and current member of the Los Angeles Police Commission, Debra Wong Yang, and the director of the Police Assessment Resource Center (PARC), Merrick Bobb, to

address serious policing problems in the city. They will assist with litigation and policy issues amid allegations of racial discrimination and retaliation brought by a group of current and former officers and an FBI investigation into possible civil rights violations by Burbank police officers.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Justice found problems with the Inglewood Police Department's oversight of use of force and complaint investigations, and training and policies addressing Tasers. The Justice Department also found that Inglewood's deadly force policies were outdated and inconsistent with current legal standards.

Lastly, in San Diego, the city eliminated the position of director of the Citizens Review Board on Police Practices, while the San Diego County Citizens Law Enforcement Review Board (CLERB) saw significant revisions to its rules, including, preventing complainants from appealing a CLERB decision after discovering new evidence; forcing CLERB to cease investigations if the involved officer resigns or retires; and postponing CLERB investigations if either involved party is facing criminal charges. ■

Brian Buchner is a Special Investigator with the Los Angeles Office of the Inspector General.

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Greetings From the President

2009 and 2010: Years of Change and Challenge

By Philip K. Eure

This is an exciting and challenging time for police oversight. NACOLE moved forward on several important projects in 2009 and 2010.

Our website was re-designed with a cleaner look and easier access to materials and will continue to add features and useful resources in 2010. It contains links to the websites of most of the oversight agencies in the United States.

We hosted a highly successful conference in Austin that drew nearly 200 attendees from 28 states and from overseas as well, including people from Norway, Jamaica, Northern Ireland and Canada.

The organization initiated a mentoring program that pairs experienced oversight practitioners with early career professionals in one-on-one mentoring relationships.

NACOLE is planning an outstanding 2010 training conference to be held in Seattle, Washington, September 20 through 23 that will offer 20 training and discussion sessions covering a range of subjects relevant to oversight. The theme will be "Promoting Excellence." Planning for the conference is well underway following the NACOLE board's productive mid-winter meeting

in late January. Please consult NACOLE's website for information and the latest updates about the conference. We hope that you will join us in Seattle for what is shaping up to be an exciting conference.

As an article in this issue describes, these are challenging times financially for oversight agencies. The oversight agency in Miami-Dade County, Florida, lost its funding entirely, while another, in the city of San Diego, California, lost funding for its only full-time staff member. And other agencies around the country are facing cut-backs in funding and staff.

Closer to home, NACOLE experienced a loss that is a gain for the federal government. As many of you know, Andre Birotte, Jr., resigned as president of the NACOLE board of directors upon being sworn in as the U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California on March 4, 2009. The district includes Los Angeles and much of southern California. Andre was nominated by President Obama for the post on December 23, 2009, and he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on February 11, 2010. U.S. Department of Justice rules required Andre to resign from NACOLE.

The NACOLE board of directors would like to thank Andre for his service and we wish him well in the new job. Although we are losing a valued

colleague, we like to think we are gaining an important ally for police oversight in the U.S. government.

In light of Andre's resignation, on March 4 the board of directors voted to appoint me

to serve as NACOLE board president through the upcoming Seattle conference. Because I was already on the board, serving in the capacity of immediate past-president, and we have a great group of people on the board, the transition is proceeding smoothly. ■

Philip K. Eure is the president of NACOLE. He is also the executive director of the Office of Police Complaints in Washington, D.C.



Phil Eure, the 2010 NACOLE President

Innovative NAACP Rapid Report System to Serve as a National Database on Complaints of Police Misconduct

By Joyce M. Hicks

AT ITS CENTENNIAL CONVENTION on July 13, 2009, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) unveiled an ambitious data collection effort: its new high tech "Rapid Report System" (RRS), which gathers information about police misconduct. Through the RRS, anyone can report a complaint of police misconduct to the NAACP by cell phone, online or by fax.

In a July 1, 2009, press release, NAACP President and CEO Ben Jealous stated, "Nationwide, more than 26,000 citizen complaints of police officer use of force were filed with state and local law enforcement agencies in 2002. However, because many incidents are not reported, this number does not capture the full magnitude of the problem." The NAACP designed RRS to remedy this underreporting and provide data that can be used to improve community and law enforcement relationships.

The NAACP intends to use the police misconduct data compiled from the RRS for statistical reporting, analyzing the data and reporting the information to the public. The NAACP will also use the information as a research tool to support its policy and advocacy activities. According to Dr. Niaz Kasravi, the NAACP's Senior Manager

of Law Enforcement Accountability and the RRS project manager, as of mid-January 2010 the NAACP has received approximately 800 complaints since the launch of its website in July 2009, of which 328 contain sufficient information for analysis. Each reported incident with sufficient information about the location and type of incident will be electronically mapped. Dr. Kasravi anticipates that the national electronic map will be available on the NAACP website in early spring of 2010.

Each report of misconduct is made through an incident documentation form. The mobile version, designed for rapid reporting from a cell phone, has only eleven fields: city, state, date, whether complainant is the witness or victim, location of incident, type of incident, which law enforcement agency was involved, motivation of incident, whether a video or photo will be uploaded, the photo or video and complainant's email address. The web version of the form collects more detailed information about the complainant, information on the incident, information on the victim, information on the officer, whether the complainant has officially reported the incident, the complainant's history in witnessing other incidents of police misconduct and the complainant's racial or ethnic background. The web version of

the form is available at

www.NAACP.org.

Dr. Kasravi advises that she is implementing changes to the RRS including enabling complainants to text message complaints of police misconduct and simplifying the web version of the form. The NAACP anticipates a further publicity and education campaign after it launches the revised form.

Dr. Kasravi



Dr. Niaz Kasravi, the NAACP's Senior Manager of Law Enforcement Accountability

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Who We Are: The City of Los Angeles Office of the Inspector General

By Nicole C. Bershon

THE MISSION OF THE OFFICE OF THE Inspector General (“OIG”) for the Los Angeles Police Commission (“Police Commission”) is to provide strong, independent and effective oversight of the Los Angeles Police Department (“LAPD”) and to ensure that the LAPD and its employees act with honesty, integrity, and respect towards the public. The OIG was established in 1996 in response to a recommendation in the 1991 Independent Report prepared by the Christopher Commission in the aftermath of the Rodney King incident. The OIG was strengthened in 2001 after the LAPD entered into a federal Consent Decree with the United States Department of Justice in the wake of the Rampart Scandal in the late 1990s.

From 2001 until July of 2009, much of the OIG’s work was devoted to ensuring that both its and LAPD’s myriad Consent Decree responsibilities were being met. The Consent Decree imposed responsibilities on the OIG in three core areas: operational audits, categorical uses of force, and complaint intake and discipline. The Consent Decree required that the OIG perform audits of certain LAPD operations, such as gang units, search warrant procedures, and arrest, booking and charging procedures. In addition, the Consent Decree mandated that the OIG review all officer-involved shootings, in custody deaths, head strikes with an impact weapon, and other law enforcement related injuries involving hospitalization (collectively, “categorical uses of force” or

“CUOFs”). Finally, under the Consent Decree, the OIG undertook responsibility to serve as an intake point for complaints from members of the public and LAPD employees. The OIG also reviewed the Chief’s imposition of discipline quarterly, and annually reviewed LAPD’s handling of retaliation claims made by LAPD employees.

In July of 2009, a federal judge terminated the Consent Decree, and approved a Transition Agreement between the original parties to the Consent Decree. Under the Transition Agreement, the OIG is required to perform periodic audits in the following areas: 1) biased policing; 2) financial disclosure; 3) the operation of LAPD’s gang units; and 4) TEAMS II (Training and Evaluation Automated Management Systems). Moreover, the OIG continues to perform many of the core functions it performed under the Consent Decree, including the following: 1) taking complaints from the public and LAPD employees; 2) performing quarterly reviews of the Chief’s imposition of discipline; 3) responding to the scene of all CUOFs and performing an independent review of the LAPD’s investigation into each incident; and 4) conducting other audits and reviews.



The staff of the Los Angeles Office of the Inspector General.

In addition, the OIG conducts outreach to educate the community about the OIG, the Police Commission, and the LAPD in the wake of high-profile use of force incidents and other newsworthy developments.

The OIG carries out its mission through the following four sections. These sections combine, in the OIG, the strongest components of various oversight models, including: auditing of past investigations, real-time monitoring of current investigations, and policy review and recommendations for policy reform.

Complaint Section

The Complaint Section’s primary function is interacting with

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Austin Conference a BIG success

Cutting-edge presentations and prominent speakers highlighted Halloween weekend conference

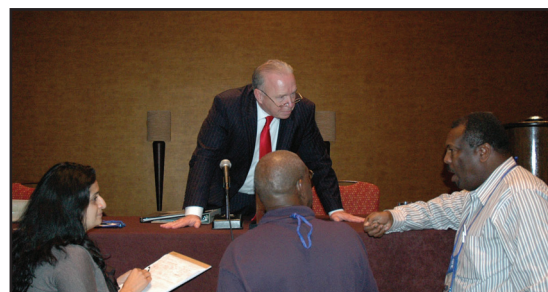
By Sacheen Yates

AUSTIN’S OFFICE OF THE POLICE Monitor (OPM) lived up to Texas’ reputation for doing things big when they hosted the 15th Annual NACOLE Conference in their city on October 31 to November 2, 2009. NACOLE and the OPM staff delivered a conference as unique as Austin itself for 195 attendees representing 64 different cities in 28 states and four foreign countries.

The conference began on Halloween, which Austinites love and celebrate with food, live music, entertainment, and a colorful costume parade. Conference participants were encouraged to partake in the festivities. The opening reception on Saturday evening at Austin’s City Hall, located just across the river from the convention hotel,

was a festive affair with Texas-barbecue and more than a few conference participants in costume. Many of them joined 100,000 Austinites in the Entertainment District Parade, an informal procession of celebrants in outfits ranging from costume store rentals to fantastic other-worldly designs worthy of a George Lucas film.

The four-day conference, whose theme was “Focusing on the Future” offered presentations and discussions on issues such as the enforcement of U.S. immigration laws and the impact of the Iraq war on veterans working in law enforcement. Participants heard from and networked with a long list of distinguished panelists and guest speakers including Shanetta Y. Cutlar, Chief of the Special Litigation Section of the U.S.



Judge Charles Baird of the District Court in Austin discusses his presentation on relationships between law enforcement and youth with (left) Anita Rahtore of the Institution Against Public Discrimination in Oslo, Norway and (right) Phil Young, Independent Police Auditor, Akron, Ohio.

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Book review:

Conducting Administrative, Oversight & Ombudsman Investigations

By Gareth Jones, Canada Law Book, 2009
(www.canadalawbook.ca) 419 pages

By Dawn Reynolds

CONDUCTING ADMINISTRATIVE, Oversight & Ombudsman Investigations presents a lively and intelligent dissection of the art of non-criminal and systemic investigations. The book is a wakeup call to the blessedly simple elements identified by Gareth Jones, the Director of the Special Ombudsman Response Team (SORT) at the Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario, Canada, as fundamental to good investigations.

1. The investigators must be as independent as possible.
2. The investigators must be trained and experienced.
3. All potentially relevant issues must be identified and, where appropriate, pursued.
4. The investigation must be sufficiently resourced.
5. All relevant physical evidence must be identified, preserved, collected and examined as necessary.
6. All relevant documentation must be secured and reviewed.
7. All relevant witnesses must be identified, segregated where practical and thoroughly interviewed.
8. The analysis of all the material gathered in the investigation must be objective and based solely on the facts.

But, as Jones points out, “it is surprising how often these principles are neglected or outright ignored, perhaps due to ignorance, arrogance, complacency, inattentiveness or simply when too much is taken for granted.” Jones’ use of case studies illustrates the rewards of well-conducted investigations as well as the consequences of

investigations which lead to obfuscation of the truth and skepticism on the part of the public.

Chapters within the book provide helpful templates for investigators and administrators seeking to improve public service. Of particular interest is the chapter on selecting topics for and conducting systemic investigations. Jones advocates that “[I]nvestigative agencies have the power to do more than just address individual complaints.” He goes on to say, “One complaint may be symptomatic of a much bigger problem. One grievance can point to hundreds, even thousands, of similar ones, all with the same or similar root cause.” Jones provides a handy set of rationales to overcome administrative opposition to conducting such investigations, neatly laying out the long-term benefits and eventual cost-savings such investigations can wield. It is apparent he is an old-hand in doggedly pursuing the truth while gently side-stepping and persuading naysayers. And he writes with the confidence of a practiced eye for spotting fact patterns that reveal governmental patterns and practices that are unjust or, in some cases, simply absurd.

Such practices are often aided and abetted by weak investigations. Jones used the following brief news clip to underscore the necessity of interviewing all the witnesses who might have relevant information.

A US Army officer who investigated possible abuse at Guantanamo Bay after some guards purportedly bragged of beating detainees found no evidence that they mistreated the prisoners—although he did not interview any of the alleged victims, the military said yesterday. (The Toronto Star, February 7, 2007)

In response, Jones writes, “The investigator does not have to believe what the person says, of course, but the only type of investigation involving bodily harm where an investigator does not at

least try to interview the alleged victim that I am aware of is a homicide investigation and, in that instance, a tenacious investigator will ponder whether it might be worth holding a séance.”

Under a useful section on lessons learned, Jones argues for expanding complainants’ access to information about the investigations into their cases. He also recommends using published summaries to underscore the value of investigations conducted by government agencies.

Jones also provides a fascinating look into the 2007 Taser death of Robert Dziekanski at the Vancouver, B.C. airport, the media attention the case received, and the maelstrom surrounding the video footage that showed police using a Taser on Mr. Dziekanski within 25 seconds of coming into contact with the unarmed and clearly mentally disoriented subject. Jones uses the incident to provide a detailed checklist of factors to be used in gauging whether the investigation, then still pending, was conducted properly.

Perhaps it is one of the benefits of being Canadian and working within a system of oversight that is well-developed at the regional and national level, but Jones’ book fairly glistens with confidence that a government’s commitment to transparency and thoroughness is a good thing. For professionals in, and followers of, the field and practice of police oversight the book is a welcome reminder that the work we do is not only meaningful and challenging, it is fun. ■

Dawn Reynolds is the Deputy Police Auditor in Eugene, Oregon.



Gareth Jones, author of *Conducting Administrative, Oversight & Ombudsman Investigations*

Suggestions?

We are constantly seeking suggestions for articles and feedback on what you would like to see in upcoming issues, as well as volunteers to write articles and book reviews.

If you have ideas or would like to help, please contact Jayson Wechter at: Jayson@well.com

Budget Reductions Impact Oversight Agencies Across the United States

Agencies grapple with potential staffing and service cuts and increased employee stress

By Patrick Hunter

SHRINKING REVENUES FOR STATE and local governments is effecting funding for civilian oversight agencies across the country. Cutbacks have impacted agencies of all sizes and have resulted in funding decreases ranging from four to sixty percent of operating budgets, and in one case, elimination of funding for an agency completely.

In Florida, Miami-Dade County's Independent Review Panel lost all of its \$450,000 yearly operating budget effective October 1, 2009, forcing the agency, which reviewed citizen complaints of misconduct by police and other county agencies to effectively close its doors. Complaints will now be directed to local law enforcement agencies for resolution.

In December 2009 the San Diego City Council approved the Mayor's proposal to eliminate the position of Executive Director, Citizens' Review Board on Police Practices for an estimated savings of \$130,000 over an 18-month period. The 23-member volunteer Review Board will continue its civilian oversight of the San Diego Police Department under the direction of the City's Human Relations Commission Executive Director. This follows the elimination of all dedicated administrative support for both agencies a year earlier as a cost-cutting measure.

Survey on budget cutbacks

An informal survey on budget cutbacks was sent to fifty oversight agencies in the United States, with nearly half responding (because many are reluctant to draw attention to their budgets, specific agencies will not be identified). Agencies reported budget cuts ranging from 4 percent to 60 percent, or \$32,000 to \$80,000. However, most agencies reported that their current and projected budgets involve minimal staff cuts. Core services

have been largely unscathed and most agencies are able to fill vacant positions.

Reduced Compensation and Furloughs

Agencies across the country reported experiencing pay freezes or pay reductions up to 10 percent. In some jurisdictions, employees are taking unpaid furlough time to address budget shortfalls. Some oversight agencies have imposed as few as four or five furlough days in 2010; others implemented two hours of furlough time per week for a total of 13 days a year. One agency has furloughed staff two days each month.

Furloughing employees has a direct and significant effect on oversight agency caseloads. Some agencies have been able to protect their investigative positions from furlough while administrative and support staffs have been furloughed.

Doing More with Less

Agencies attempted to protect their existing staff and budget and to maintain the high levels of service expected by their communities with some supervisors and agency heads assuming a more active role in day-to-day functions. Any reductions in service were directly related to loss of staffing, but few agencies were forced to curtail any programs they offered. Due to successful outreach activities, some agencies have experienced an increase in complaints received and services provided. One agency has replaced full time investigators with contract investigators paid on an hourly basis.

Travel and training budgets have been hit the hardest, which could have a serious impact on an agency's ability to remain current with new developments in the oversight field.

Stress Levels

Nine of the twelve agencies that responded to

a question about stress levels reported increasing staff stress due to budget reductions. Four of those nine agencies reported low levels of stress, one reported a medium stress level and four agencies indicated that the staffs were experiencing a high level of stress. In many instances, even the prospect of budget reductions increased stress levels for staff members and others who depend on the agency's services, which could have a potentially deleterious effect on an agency's performance.

In search of best practices

Few suggestions of best practices were presented for budget preservation. Richard Rosenthal, Independent Monitor for the City and County of Denver believes his agency was spared cuts in operation because of "...recognition by police and sheriff command staff acknowledging that that we provide a service to them that helps them to ensure (and publicly defend) the integrity of the complaint handling and disciplinary processes."

Be Prepared

Oversight agencies should be prepared to respond to requests for reductions in staff and operations and to defend their missions through community and government outreach. Civilian oversight of law enforcement has evolved to effectively improve police-community relations and oversight agencies should not be considered niceties or luxuries. They have become an integral part of their government's efforts to improve the quality of law enforcement in their communities. ■

Patrick Hunter served as the Executive Director of the Citizens' Review Board on Police Practices for the City of San Diego.

The NACOLE Review

THE NACOLE REVIEW is produced under the supervision of NACOLE's board of directors. The board thanks those individuals who contributed to this edition of the newsletter. This edition of the NACOLE Review was edited by Jayson Wechter and Ilana Rosenzweig. In addition, the board is grateful for the assistance of Cameron McEllhiney, who provides independent contracting services for NACOLE. We would also like to extend our gratitude to Matthew Brooks of Brooks Publications, Inc., www.urbantimesonline.com, for providing layout and publication services to the NACOLE Review.

“Seattle,”

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Practitioner of Oversight (CPO) Credential for those who have earned their Certificate of Training at three qualifying conferences in a five-year period. Because credit towards the CPO Credential began at the 2008 conference, this will be the first year that participants will be eligible to be awarded the Credential.

For further details regarding the conference and the credential program, please visit www.nacole.org throughout the spring and summer for the most up to date information.

We hope to see you in September! ■

Cameron McElhiney is the NACOLE Conference Coordinator.

“NAACP,”

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expects that these combined efforts will greatly increase the numbers of incidents reported to the NAACP.

The RRS is part of the NAACP’s new criminal justice initiative, “Smart and Safe”. In brief, according to the NAACP, the Smart and Safe initiative is a “framework in which to implement an advocacy agenda to ensure equal justice and safer communities.” Among the key goals of Smart and Safe are: 1) to improve the manner in which the U.S. administers criminal justice; 2) to move away from the failed “tough on crime” policies towards policies that are “smart on crime;” 3) to increase trust between law enforcement officers and the communities they serve; 4) to end the practice of racial profiling because it is ineffective and makes us all less safe; 5) to get communities to rehabilitate first or second time, low level nonviolent drug offenders rather than sending them to prison; and 6) to establish pre-release programs to send people home from prison with more skills than when they entered prison.

The NAACP’s ambitious data collection initiative is still in its infancy as it is less than one year old. It is, however, a development worth monitoring. When fully implemented, the NAACP envisions that the Rapid Reporting

System will provide the public with valuable national information about complaints of police misconduct. ■

Joyce M. Hicks is the Director of the San Francisco Office of Citizen Complaints.

“Los Angeles,”

Continued from page 3

and monitoring the disciplinary process of LAPD. This section does the following:

- Assists members of the public and LAPD employees in filing complaints of misconduct.
- Assists LAPD employees in matters involving allegations of retaliation and other workplace concerns, as well as monitors LAPD’s investigations into such matters.
- Ensures that other complaints of misconduct are properly handled and thoroughly investigated.
- Prepares quarterly reviews of the Chief of Police’s imposition of discipline to assist the Police Commission in assessing the appropriateness of the Chief’s actions, which assessment is included in the Chief’s annual performance evaluation.
- Conducts independent investigations into complaints against the Chief.

Each year, the Complaint Section conducts between 200-300 case reviews at the request of the complainant or other involved party, the Police Commission, or other public official, or in connection with one of its quarterly reports. These case reviews consist of a review of all underlying documentation contained within the investigation, as well as a review of selected tape-recorded interviews to ensure compliance with applicable laws and LAPD policy.. Moreover, in 2009 the Complaint Section received approximately 1,000 contacts from members of the public either in person, or via email, facsimile, written correspondence or by telephone.

Audit Section

The Audit Section performs its own audits or reviews completed LAPD audits on the following topics:

- Complaint Investigations; which have secured the release
- Warrant Applications and Supporting Affidavits;
- Confidential Informants;
- Non-Categorical Use of Force Investigations;
- Arrest Booking and Charging Reports;
- Gang Enforcement Detail Selection Criteria; and
- Sting Audits of LAPD Personnel.

In 2009, the Audit Section conducted approximately 20 audits and reviews of various LAPD operations. In 2010, as a result of additional responsibilities imposed by the Transition Agreement, the Audit Section anticipates conducting approximately 28 audits and reviews of various lengths and complexity. This will include the first-ever audit of the LAPD’s compliance with various financial disclosure requirements imposed on personnel assigned to various gang and narcotics units of LAPD.

Use of Force Section

The Use of Force Section carries out the OIG’s responsibility to assess LAPD’s investigation and adjudication of every officer-involved shooting, in custody death, head strike with an impact weapon, and other law enforcement related injuries involving hospitalization (collectively, “categorical uses of force” or “CUOFs”) involving an LAPD employee. It performs this function through direct involvement in every stage of the investigative and adjudicative process, including:

- Being immediately notified of a CUOF;
- Going to the scene of the CUOF and observing the investigation in progress.
- Reviewing LAPD’s Force Investigation Division’s (FID) investigation of the CUOF;
- Attending LAPD’s Use of Force Review Board; and
- Preparing an evaluation for the Police Commission of FID’s investigation and the Chief’s evaluation of the incident, addressing both the investigative procedures and the

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NACOLE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

NACOLE relies on sponsorships, in-kind donations and other support in addition to conference registration fees to produce successful annual conferences. We encourage our members and supporters to consider this opportunity to make a tax-deductible donation to help ensure the success of the upcoming conference in Seattle, WA.

Please contact Cameron McElhiney for more information about the benefits of sponsorship at CammeS@aol.com.

substantive conclusions, as well as providing recommendations as to how the OIG believes the Police Commission should adjudicate the CUOF incident.

Each year, this section conducts reviews of approximately 100 CUOF incidents.

Special Projects Section

This section was established in 2007 to provide the OIG the flexibility to respond more quickly to emergency or high-profile events that require immediate review.

Shortly after the creation of the section, LAPD officers were involved in multiple televised uses of force during an immigration protest in Los Angeles's MacArthur Park on May 1, 2007. The Special Projects Section was responsible for the intake of many of the individual complaints lodged in the wake of this incident as well as providing real-time input to LAPD during its subsequent Internal Affairs investigation. In addition, the OIG presented to the Police Commission a comprehensive analysis of the discipline ultimately imposed on the involved officers.

Other projects have included:

- Evaluating the constitutionality of LAPD enforcement efforts involving the homeless in Los Angeles's Skid Row;
- Assisting the City's other police agency – the Office of Public Safety – in revamping its systems for investigating complaints and uses of force; and
- Auditing LAPD's investigations of allegations of an Unlawful Search.

In addition to the Inspector General, the OIG is staffed by four Assistant Inspectors General, eleven Special Investigators, eight Police Performance Auditors, five administrative personnel, and one sworn sergeant. ■

Nicole Bershon is the Assistant Inspector General of the Office of the Inspector General for the Los Angeles Police Commission.

“Austin,”

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Department of Justice and Dr. Bill Lewinski, the founder and Executive Director of the Force Science Research Center at Minnesota State University.

Dr. Lewinski, a behavioral scientist whose specialty is studying high stress, rapidly unfolding force encounters, discussed the factors necessary to properly investigate and evaluate officer-involved shootings. He highlighted how selective focus of attention (exemplified by a baseball player catching a high fly ball) and inattentive blindness effect officers' reactions in deadly force encounters and their ability to accurately recall what happened.

Keynote speaker Craig Watkins, the District Attorney of Dallas County, Texas, described the bold (and pioneering) steps his office has taken in reviewing hundreds of past convictions in partnership with the Innocence Project of Texas, which have secured the release of wrongfully-convicted inmates using DNA evidence.

Other conference highlights included a presentation on Working with the Mentally Ill by Lisa Moore, President of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and local experts in mental health and crisis intervention, the public rollout of National Guidelines for Civilian Oversight Professionals by Merrick Bobb of the Police Assessment Resource Center (PARC) and a panel on a Comprehensive Program for Addressing Bias in Policing featuring nationally renowned expert Dr. Lorie Fridell.

The conference also featured a special performance of “The Rant,” a play written by Andrew Case, a former investigator with New York City's Civilian Complaints Review Board. The play recounts the tensions and conflicting accounts that emerge from a police shooting of an African-American teenager. As a civilian oversight investigator who has wrestled with her own issues of ethnic identity and racism probes the shooting, she confronts contradictions in all the accounts of the incident, distrust from the family of the deceased and the police and a closing of ranks by officers around their beleaguered colleague. This powerful performance held special resonance for an audience facing

similar challenges in their work.

In a sunnier light, in keeping with Austin's goal of being the fittest city in the nation by 2012, the OPM coordinated daily fitness activities including walking, running, biking, and kayaking. The “green theme” of the conference was very popular with attendees, who received flash drives loaded with conference materials (significantly reducing the amount of paper used), jute tote bags and recycled water bottles. Instead of receiving traditional gifts, Conference Speakers and Panelists each had a tree planted in their honor as a special thank you for sharing their knowledge and expertise. ■

Sacheen Yates is a compliance specialist in the Office of the Austin Police Monitor.

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- Cost is \$5500 which includes resource binders for attendees and instructor travel in US
- Contact Lorie Fridell at lfridell@bcs.usf.edu or 813-991-9655

According to Independent Police Monitor, Michael Gennaco, "Dr. Fridell's class is the gold standard for addressing contemporary issues of bias based policing" (Report prepared for the City of Palo Alto, February 16, 2010, p. 8)

Lorie Fridell, Ph.D., a national expert on racially biased policing, will describe what is known about the social psychology of human biases and provide guidance on how to promote fair and impartial policing in the areas of policy, training, supervision/accountability, leadership, recruitment/hiring, outreach, and measurement.



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