

CALIFORNIA RACIAL AND IDENTITY PROFILING ADVISORY BOARD

<https://oag.ca.gov/ab953/board>

POST TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

October 7, 2020

Subcommittee Members Present: Sandra Brown, Damon Kurtz, Melanie Ochoa, Angela Sierra, Warren Stanley

Subcommittee Members Absent: None

1. Introductions

Co-Chair Sandra Brown called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. The meeting was held by videoconference with a quorum of members present.

2. Approval of August 5, Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Member Hawkins made a motion to approve the August 5, 2020 subcommittee meeting minutes. Member Sierra seconded the motion.

APPROVAL: The five subcommittee members present voted “yes”; there were no “no” votes and no abstentions.

3. Update of Subcommittee Work by Department of Justice

Aisha Martin-Walton with DOJ presented the Board with an overview of the Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission (POST) and the AB 953 mandated training. She stated that POST serves 96,000 peace officers and dispatchers, mandates 664 hours of training, has 135 staff including over 30 Consultants. She further stated that it has a budget of \$82 million and an 18 member Commission, which holds three public meetings per year to provide fiscal and training course development and certification direction and leadership to POST staff.

Ms. Martin-Walton updated the Subcommittee on the mandatory training courses required of POST by AB 953. She stated that new recruits seeking initial peace officer certification take courses in their Basic Academy training program and seasoned officers are required to take a two-hour course once every five years offered by POST. She stated that per the statute, the courses were to be developed in consultation with the RIPA Board, which is then tasked providing an analysis in the Board’s annual report. Ms. Martin-Walton advised that POST developed five courses to meet the AB 953 mandate; two courses for new recruits and three courses for seasoned officers, one of which is for supervisors. To date RIPA Board Subcommittee members have reviewed two courses for the seasoned officers.

Ms. Martin-Walton also, provided a summary of areas of interest requested by the POST Subcommittee for POST to consider including in its training program. They included, using the

RIPA data, actual footage of incidents in lieu of scripts and actors, courses that emphasize the community perspective, officer peer-to-peer accountability and deeper discussions about the reasons for a traffic or pedestrian stop. She stated that there was interest from subcommittee members for POST to connect the Academy training with the Field Training Officer training to measure the effectiveness of the racial and identity and cultural awareness training received.

Associate Government Program Analyst Anna Rick from DOJ advised the Subcommittee that CRES will begin a literature review on the topic of Diversity in Law Enforcement in preparation for the Board's work to address recruitment, hiring and promotions. Ms. Rick highlighted the article, "Hidden in Plain Sight" published by the Brennan Center for Justice which looks at the effect of diverse organizations and the cultural shifts that happen when there is representation in large numbers or a critical mass and explicit racism in law enforcement. She also highlighted "Women in Policing" by the National Institute of Justice, "Pathways to Promotion" by the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, and "Race, Ethnicity, and Perceived Minority Police Presence: Examining perceptions of criminal injustice among Los Angeles residents" by Wang, Ready, and Davies. Ms. Rick shared that studies such as these showed that women officers help break barriers in agencies, they are better able to neutralize escalating situations, and less likely to use excessive force than male officers, yet more women are found in administrative jobs than in peace officer jobs.

Senior Legal Analyst Anthony Jackson of DOJ, highlighted two articles: Vicky Wilkin's and Brian William's "Black or Blue: Racial Profiling and Representative Bureaucracy and Nicolson-Croty, S. Nicholson-Crotty and J. Fernandez's article entitled "Will More Black Cops Matter." Mr. Jackson stated that these authors suggested that there is a positive impact on violence in minority communities when there is a congruence between the law enforcement organization and the community as it relates to race, ethnicity and gender. He also pointed out that a study by the Washington POST showed that an organization has to reach a level of 35% or a critical mass number of representative officers to see violence against black citizens by police to decrease. He stated the authors found that structural socialism and pressure to conform can strip people of color of their racial identity, to the point where they identify as an officer first.

4. Public Comment

Michele Wittig with the Santa Monica Police Reform advised against relying on Diagnostic Tests during the officer background screening process because many were developed years ago, may be biased and irrelevant.

5. Discussion of Proposed Subcommittee Report Contents and Next Steps with Post

Co-Chair Brown thanked the DOJ staff and expressed interest in learning more about the POST Commission meetings and their work related to training and recruitment.

Co-Chair Ochoa expressed interest in the effectiveness of Implicit Bias Training. Regarding diversity law enforcement, she expressed several thoughts including the use of credit scores and other categories in the law enforcement hiring process and the adverse impact these factors could have on representation. She also expressed interest in learning more about the criteria used in the psychology screening of applicants in the background process. Co-Chair Ochoa expressed interest in learning about policy positions advocated by police unions and whether black officers are being excluded or harmed by these policies and are they embraced by Black police unions.

Co-Chair Sandra Brown is interested in law enforcement agencies possibly surveying Black officers to gather direct feedback about their treatment on the job, because Black officers can receive disparaging remarks and treatment from both Black and White races. Board member Sierra agreed that this is key to recognizing reasons citizens may not want to go into law enforcement and changes that can be made internally. Co-Chair Ochoa agreed that Black people in particular may not want to be involved in an agency that they feel mistreat members of their community. Co-Chair Brown stated that not every community has officers of color. The income level paid by an agency and a review of whether an officer is a good fit can be factors. Hiring good people is primary and it is then helpful if they reflect the members of the community being served.

Board member Hawkins advised that law enforcement officers often treat victims and their families at a crime scene as suspects. She stated that when victims report a crime they are not taken seriously and they experience bias by the officer because of how they look and their zip code. Board member Hawkins provided an example of when a parent shows up to a scene and sees that their child has been murdered, and officers hand cuff the parents and treat them like criminals. She stated that officers need to be trained how to communicate with all parties at a crime scene and to show empathy in their treatment towards the families. Board member Hawkins stated that RIPA Board should connect with the National Organization of Black law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) who works on these issues and is a resource to her and other LA community advocates. Board member Hawkins also referenced an organization entitled Police Against Racism which meets weekly in Los Angeles. Co-Chair Brown added that officer training needs to become conversations during roll call and whenever officers gather and communicate with their superiors.

Co-Chair Brown stated that recruitment methods by law enforcement should change. Going out to the community visiting schools, churches and events with swag and information is not enough and not very effective. Applying recruitment techniques used by college and professional athletic teams might work better. They recruit the applicant and their family.

Board member Woods asked POST what percentage of their trainings are face to face. He also asked why is the mandated RIPA training for seasoned officers not provided on an annual basis and that teaching anti-racist behavior should be a priority. Co-Chair Sandra Brown also asked

why the POST Principle Policing course for in service officers is voluntary. Meagan Catafi, a POST representative, responded that AB 953 contains a once every five year mandate for RIPA training that can be in person or not and that the cost to train over 90,000 officers annually is prohibitive.

Subcommittee member Woods responded that in his opinion the answer by the POST representative was insufficient and added that that if the Board and agency partners are going to try to keep all people safe and if they want to get it right then they have to spend more money on training. Ms. Catafi added that most agencies conduct annual training and agreed to send the Board the link on the POST website. Subcommittee member Woods stated that the RIPA Board should push for more funding RIPA related training for officers. On the topic of diversity in law enforcement, subcommittee member Woods stated that in order to combat racism and white supremacy in law enforcement agencies, it is important to hire the right people with the right attitudes.

6. Public Comments

There were no additional public comments

7. Discussion of Next Steps

For the 2022 report, Co-Chair Brown recommended that the Subcommittee Members review three POST courses entitled “Principled Policing and the Community”, Learning Domain 3, for the Academy, “Cultural Diversity and Discrimination”, Learning Domain 42, for the Academy, and “Profiling and Implicit Bias Refresher for Supervisors’. Board member Sierra, requested that POST consult with the Board early in planning their courses. The Subcommittee expressed interest in DOJ continuing the literature reviews of articles and studies on Diversity in Law Enforcement for future presentations to the Subcommittee and Board with a goal to create a list of best practices.

8. Adjourn

Co-Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 3:50pm