

CALIFORNIA RACIAL AND IDENTITY PROFILING ADVISORY BOARD (BOARD)

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CALLS FOR SERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2022, 10:08 a.m. - 11:55 a.m.

Subcommittee Members Present: Chair Manju Kulkarni, Chair William Ayub, Tamani Taylor

Subcommittee Members Absent: Abdul Pridgen, Steven Raphael

1. Introductions

Co-Chair Ayub called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Each subcommittee member introduced themselves.

2. Approval of February 17, 2022 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Member Taylor motioned to approve the minutes. Co-Chair Kulkarni seconded the motion. All members voted “Yes,” there were no “No” votes, and no abstentions.

3. Overview by the Department of Justice

Jennifer Soliman, Deputy Attorney General (DAG) within the Civil Rights Enforcement Section, stated that the Calls for Service Subcommittee (herein Subcommittee) expressed interest in understanding the outcomes related to critical response teams, critical intervention teams, and crisis response teams, and is additionally interested in bias by proxy and mental health-related calls for service. She stated that the San Francisco Street Crisis Response Team would provide a presentation to follow up on a previous presentation that they provided for the subcommittee and discuss the program outcomes. She stated that POST would also provide a presentation about updates to dispatcher training and the role of dispatchers in calls for service.

4. Update regarding Dispatch and Crisis Intervention Models

Kathleen Silk, Director of the Street Crisis Response Team (SCRT) with San Francisco Department of Public Health, reminded the subcommittee that the goal of SCRT is to provide an alternative response to behavioral health crises – an alternative to law enforcement. She stated that SCRT was launched in November of 2020 and provides rapid, trauma-informed responses to calls for service to people experiencing crisis. She stated that SCRT is reached through 9-1-1 and the calls to date were directed through the police dispatch system. However, Ms. Silk stated that a new dispatch process would be implemented. She stated that the response teams are made up of three members: a Fire Department community paramedic, a behavioral health clinician, and a peer counselor. She stated that this team delivers therapeutic de-escalation in the community, on scene, and can provide transportation to sub-acute locations or call for an ambulance if someone requires transportation to a hospital.

Ms. Silk stated that SCRT launched a separate team through the Office of Coordinated Care (OCC) in April of 2021 which is comprised of behavioral health clinicians and health workers who provide follow-up and care coordination during the 24- to 48-hour period following a crisis, when people are very vulnerable to another crisis. She stated that, in some instances, the team will link people to care providers they already have but haven’t seen in a while and they are also able to create new linkages. She stated that OCC provides support seven days per week and was presently providing linkages to 75 percent of the people seen by SCRT in the field.

Ms. Silk stated that SCRT provides 24 hours of daily coverage and includes district-specific teams and teams that provide city-wide overnight coverage. She stated that district-based teams are able to build relationships in the communities that they serve.

Ms. Silk stated that data regarding the SCRT is published online each month via a dashboard and is additionally included in an annual report. During the first-year pilot of SCRT, over 60 percent of encounters are resolved in the community, which is in line with SCRT's mission to de-escalate crises in the community. She stated that the role of SCRT is to help people get back to their baseline of functioning. She stated that there is an outstanding need for housing resources for SCRT clients; 75 percent of SCRT clients are unhoused. Ms. Silk stated that the volume of calls directed to SCRT has continued to increase monthly since the program began. She stated that there is a goal to increase community members' comfort in calling 9-1-1 for a response to behavioral health crises as they learn that SCRT will respond. She stated that a low percentage of SCRT clients (6 percent) require an involuntary hold based on a mental illness (Welfare and Institutions Code 5150 hold). Ms. Silk stated that SCRT collects client demographic information which shows that SCRT clients are very diverse in race, ethnicity, age, and gender.

April Sloan with the San Francisco Fire Department stated that SCRT has responded to over 10,000 calls and had requested that police respond to the location about two percent of the time. She stated that calls that would require a law enforcement response, such as calls about active violence or a crime being committed, are screened and not referred to SCRT. She stated that in 83 instances SCRT requested that police respond to the location related to concerns about immediate danger to personnel or the public, 35 instances related to a person's inability to follow directions to be safe (passive resistance), 26 instances where traffic control assistance was needed, 15 instances related to active resistance.

Rob Smuts, Deputy Director with the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management (DEM), stated that DEM runs the 9-1-1 Center in San Francisco. He stated that on June 22, 2022, SCRT will transition from processing calls using police protocols to using medical protocols which would allow a medical unit such as the Street Wellbeing Response team (SWRT), another alternative response team, to respond in the event a SCRT unit is unavailable removing police response for SCRT eligible calls.

To supplement a prior statement from Ms. Silk, Mr. Smuts noted that historically SCRT eligible call volumes have remained stagnant until a 1.5 years ago referencing that SCRT now receives 14,000 calls. As a possible explanation, Mr. Smuts noted that the increase could be due to latent demand that is only now calling in response to the positive work SCRT has provided.

In addition to transitioning to medical protocols when processing calls, Mr. Smuts informed of two additional changes. For one, DEM will work with the Fire Department to redefine what is considered a weapon to better provide the services required for calls. Mr. Smuts prefaced that current protocol dictates medical units to stage while police respond first to scenarios involving weapons. Mr. Smuts stated that by adding nuance to the definition, such as whether an object is being brandished as a weapon, calls can more appropriately be responded to. Secondly, Mr. Smuts informed the Subcommittee that two additional police-alternative initiatives apart from SCRT will be implemented in San Francisco with the aim to complement but not subtract from SCRT or Law Enforcement's functions/roles.

When the floor opened for questions, Chair Ayub inquired whether community outcome measurements such as decreases in crime and use of force could be observed as SCRT responses to calls increased. Ms. Silks noted that the annual report released in February and an incoming second study would be able to provide qualitative and longitudinal data that may be pertinent to Chair Ayub's inquiry. Mr. Smuts additionally noted that SCRT's incoming transition to medical protocols when processing calls may prove more revealing.

Co-Chair Kulkarni asked whether any outreach was performed prior to SCRT implementation and whether any outreach is currently performed. Ms. Silks answered that at the pilot phase of the program, time was allocated to the district-specific teams to perform outreach and establish connections. Current outreach endeavors include quarterly community stakeholder meetings and SCRT teams proactively providing services when an individual experiencing a crisis is spotted during community SCRT's regular performance of duties. Ms. Silk added that the data collected is used to better understand the communities SCRT operates in.

Chair Ayub also inquired for an expanded explanation of SCRT's follow-up protocols that provide additional services within the 24- to 48-hour period following a crisis. Ms. Silk answered after responding to the initial event, OCC coordinates a separate follow-up team to provide services such as contacting established health providers or linking SCRT clients to new, additional resources.

In regards to SCRT's shift to medical protocols at the end of June, Member Taylor asked whether the SCRT alternatives, in the event SCRT is unavailable to respond to a crisis, will have the same training/qualifications that can provide the same consistent results observed with SCRT. Although the team composition of SWRT differs from SCRT's, Mr. Smuts noted that SWRT will have paramedics with additional training and staff from homeless outreach to assist. Ms. Sloan added that alternative response teams, such as SCRT and SWRT, employ paramedics that undergo an additional 6 weeks of training covering substance use, psychiatric illness, de-escalation, motivational interviewing, and trauma informed care; and experience two-week rotations with other alternative response teams on the field.

Member Taylor also inquired if any monetary data, such as cost-savings, is being collected that could demonstrate the value alternative response teams can provide possibly warranting its implementation in other municipalities. Mr. Smuts answered that the initial costs with SCRT implementation is higher than dispatching police units but noted that the longitudinal data will provide the definitive answer as to SCRT's cost saving value.

Continuing their inquiry on the topic of data, Co-Chair Kulkarni inquired whether data is being gathered on the communities perceptions of SCRT as it relates to the efficacy of their outreach efforts, safety in relation to law enforcement, and whether recommended best practices have been developed that can be implemented in other communities. Ms. Silk informed the Subcommittee that the annual report will contain public perception data and similar information pertinent to the Subcommittee's inquiry but acknowledged the Subcommittee's concern was important.

DAG Soliman and the Subcommittee thanked SCRT for their appearance and time.

DAG Soliman introduced Meaghan Poulos. Meaghan Poulos is the legislative liaison and public information officer for the Police Officer Standards and Trainings Board (POST) and presented on POST's public safety dispatcher course. Ms. Poulos initiated her presentation noting that the public safety dispatcher course is required for all dispatchers to complete within the first-year of being hired and consists of 14 learning domains requiring 120 minimum hours to be taught and has not been updated since 2010. Ms. Poulos continued by informing the Subcommittee that the course will be updated and that her presentation will cover three learning domains currently being developed. She also added, that in response to concerns made by the RIPA Board among other organizations, POST is taking an initiative to follow-up on the course training and observe how the course information is being presented and perceived by dispatchers. Ms. Poulos further added that these follow-ups provide POST the opportunity to identify additional improvements that can be implemented in the course's next revision.

Ms. Poulos started her presentation by introducing the three learning domains that are being developed. The first learning domain titled Learning Domain 104: Telephone Technology and Procedures will be revamped aimed at addressing implicit and explicit biases that new dispatchers might be aware of; particularly, it will be aimed at moving dispatchers to address the caller by their preferred pronoun, move away from using sir or ma'am, and an emphasis on using the caller's name. Ms. Poulos emphasized that the implicit and explicit bias considerations for Learning Domain 104 will be integrated throughout the entire course. Learning Domain 110: Radio Technology and Procedures will be updated to prime the dispatcher to understand how their word choice, tone, pitch, and inflection can affect a peace officer's response to a call. The last topic, Learning Domain 100: Professional Orientation and Ethics, will be updated to integrate implicit and explicit bias considerations, tenets of procedural justice, and development of a community service mindset to enable dispatcher's to operate ethically.

Ms. Poulos noted that in addition to the aforementioned learning domains, POST intends to update the following learning domains:

- Wellness Management;
- Community Policing and tenets of Procedural Justice;
- Cultural Diversity;
- Gang Awareness;
- Hate Crimes;
- Critical Incidents;
- Terrorism and Extremist Group Awareness; and
- Mental Health, Crisis Intervention and De-Escalation

Ms. Poulos then discussed how the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are fundamental to the learning domain revision. She noted the process in which SMEs are derived from a diverse range of knowledge ranging from management, academy coordinators, training officers, supervisory leadership institute graduates, professional organization associates, and public members whom are selected through a vetting process. She also informed the Subcommittee that to ensure diversity, no same workgroup would develop multiple learning domains. Ms. Poulos closed her presentation inviting the Subcommittee to refer SMEs they would like to see participate in the revisions.

When the floor opened up for questions, Co-Chair Kulkarni inquired what source material would be used for learning domains on cultural diversity, gang awareness, hate crimes, and terrorism & extremist

group awareness. Ms. Poulos responded that since POST has not begun the process of updating the aforementioned learning domains no source materials has yet been gathered nor have SMEs been selected. When asked regarding whether a timetable has been generated to implement the updated learning domains, Ms. Poulos noted no implementation deadline has been established to ensure that the changes made are substantively correct.

Member Taylor asked whether surveys were conducted to identify areas dispatchers had opportunities to improve on and what initially caused POST to initiate changes. Ms. Poulos' response was that revising dispatch learning domains has always been a part of POST's strategic plan and that a public safety dispatcher analysis was conducted which surveyed all California dispatchers, among other research, has been utilized to identify areas in which dispatch service can be improved.

Member Taylor also inquired whether post-secondary trauma mitigation would be covered under any of the learning domains not only out of concern for the dispatchers but for the safety of the public who would be calling dispatchers. Ms. Poulos informed the Subcommittee such integration would be well warranted noting that research has demonstrated dispatchers experience job fatigue which can affect the job turnover rate. At the close of Ms. Poulos' presentation, DAG Soliman thanked her on behalf of the Subcommittee.

Continuing the agenda item, DAG Soliman presented her research conducted on behalf of the Subcommittee. To preface, in the past the Subcommittee had reviewed the effects of Law Enforcement response to mental health calls and bias by-proxy calls while exploring the available alternate responses in lieu of a law enforcement response. Additionally, the Subcommittee have been interested in the role a dispatcher has and ultimately the effect they have on the outcome of a call. Per the research, DAG Soliman noted that the dispatcher is a conduit between the response team and the caller. Perhaps of more pertinence, the dispatcher decides two important things which ultimately affect a call: whether a response is warranted and if so, what type of response team should be sent. As an example of a dispatcher's correct assessment, DAG Soliman noted a 2018 Oakland Incident whereby a dispatcher refrained from sending a response team after a caller, colloquially known as "BBQ Becky", requested for law enforcement.

DAG Soliman also informed the Subcommittee that research indicated that dispatchers are apprehensive to send anything short of a law enforcement response due to perceived liabilities it may incur; dispatchers are concerned of sending a response team unequipped to handle a public safety incident or an escalating situation. To address this, DAG Soliman offered a number of possible solutions to instill the confidence to make more nuanced decisions:

- Familiarizing dispatchers of their crisis response teams and their mechanisms;
- Integrating mental health and de-escalation training; and
- Implementing, Next Gen 9-1-1, a system which will provide more information to the dispatcher to use for further assessments

In addition to the aforementioned solutions, federal legislation may mandate a 9-8-8 number which will run contemporaneously with 9-1-1 and is set to be implemented in July 2022. The 9-8-8 number will be

staffed by certified suicide prevention centers with the expertise in dealing with mental health and similar crises. DAG Soliman then concluded her presentation and opened the floor to questions from the Subcommittee.

In light of the knowledge that dispatch courses have not been updated since 2010 and with no timeline that establishes implementation of updated material, Chair Kulkarni asked DAG Soliman what function the RIPA Board and this subcommittee could perform to assist POST. Chair Kulkarni mentioned whether a more direct approach could be taken in the form of providing guidance and review of materials used to update the learning domains in the hope that this function can obviate issues rather than review and recommend changes post-ex-facto. DAG Soliman informed the Subcommittee that communication with POST regarding RIPA involvement is well underway and she will inform the Subcommittee once more developments occur.

Member Taylor posed the question whether changes to the dispatch learning domains are sufficient to ensure proper responses to calls; given that the practice to utilize a law enforcement response as opposed to other types of response is engrained within the work culture, Member Taylor wondered whether hiring practices should also be updated to be consistent to the direction RIPA suggests. Second, Member Taylor also raised concern for communities with no crisis response teams where a dispatcher would have no option but to send a law enforcement response to crises.

Chair Ayub commented a reminder that improving overall outcome of calls is paramount. Dispatch, law enforcement, and alternative response teams must holistically be well-functioning and cooperative to ensure favorable outcomes and responses. Having been a dispatcher, Chair Ayub empathized and acknowledged the difficult decisions dispatchers make recounting a call whereby he felt personally responsible for the safety of all involved to make the right response.

Chair Kulkarni also asked whether the 9-8-8 number, which is assigned to respond to medical and mental health calls, will also handle events with criminal elements involved. Additionally, she asked about the logistical processes (e.g., financial, workflow processes, jurisdiction, etc.) the 9-8-8 number would have. DAG Soliman answered that because the legislative mandate is new, not much particular information can be provided at this time; however, she did note that, in terms of financing, a phone tax will be implemented for the 9-8-8 number which mirrors how the 9-1-1 line is funded. She also added that the mandate would implement the 9-8-8 number across all 50 states but as to how it might function will depend on a per state basis and its infrastructure. DAG Soliman also noted that the Subcommittee would be informed as information on its development arises and that this is an outcome that can ultimately be reported within the RIPA Report.

Chair Kulkarni posed the question for the Subcommittee to consider on whether research on 3-1-1 and 2-1-1 phone numbers would complement their review of the 9-8-8 phone number. She noted that there are notable discrepancies, in far as operations, for the use of the numbers between counties.

Hearing no further questions, DAG Soliman closed the agenda item and thanked the Subcommittee for their time.

5. Discussion of Calls for Service Chapter in the 2023 Board Report

Chair Ayub opened the agenda item whereby Chair Kulkarni inquired to DAG Soliman regarding whether the Calls for Service Chapter had a timetable for completion as well as what the Subcommittee could do to assist if need be. DAG Allison Elgart informed the Subcommittee that currently the DOJ is collating the research and material. Once a draft is available it will be made available for the members to review. She also encouraged the members that upon review any additional feedback is welcomed and a discussion can be had at the next Subcommittee meeting. DAG Elgart continued noting that the next Subcommittee meeting would be an excellent platform to follow-up on any additional concerns that need be addressed regarding the draft as well as establish any formal recommendations.

Given that the RIPA Board meetings are likely to be convened in July and October, the next Subcommittee meeting could be held in August or September. An additional meeting may also be scheduled between October and December if need be. DAG Elgart also reminded the members that the DOJ would be forwarding the link to apply as an SME for the POST workshop groups. In the event either one of the members or someone referred to by the members becomes involved with the POST workshop, DAG Elgart reminded the observations developed by the SMEs could be incorporated into the 2023 RIPA report while assuring that the incorporations would be anonymized. DAG Elgart also noted that should the Subcommittee wish to add anything into the report later in the year, the related topic can be introduced in the 2023 RIPA Report and further explored in a subsequent RIPA Report. DAG Elgart also mentioned that in the next meeting Kevin Walker will provide a demographic (i.e., by race, age, and gender) breakdown of data on calls for service. DAG Elgart closed noting that though the DOJ will include the usual data analysis for Calls for Service in the 2023 RIPA Report, should the members recommend any additional analysis, the DOJ would do their best to incorporate if feasible.

Co-Chair Kulkarni suggested to have a presentation before the board by the organization that handles the Los Angeles 2-1-1 number at the next subcommittee meeting. Chair Ayub also suggested to invite CAL OES as they would be handling implementation of the 9-8-8 number.

6. Public Comment

Chair Ayub opened the public comment agenda item with DAG Elgart cueing BlueJeans participants for comment as the Subcommittee noted no members of the public were present in either the Los Angeles and Oakland locations.

Michele Wittig from the Santa Monica Coalition for Police Reform provided comment advocating for the state to prioritize a campaign designed to counteract bias by-proxy and profiling through a public health lens given the costs it incurs to officers and civilians. She shared her concern that prior messaging from past police chiefs encouraging calls to dispatch inadvertently enabled a community mindset that assumed the worse. She wanted to emphasize that though the message was not intended to draw out this negative mindset it warranted her current police chief to edit the messaging to emphasize assessment prior to calling dispatch (i.e., to think before you call). Michele Wittig noted that a public education through a campaign would help dispel or calibrate the current mindset some communities may have. In closing she reiterated her concern that profiling by law enforcement and the public should be elevated to a public health and safety concern requiring response.

Hearing no additional requests for comment, DAG Elgart closed public comment.

7. Discussion of Next Steps

Chair Ayub opened the discussion for board member comments. Co-Chair Kulkarni recommended to schedule future meeting within this agenda item as the previous scheduling method, which used e-mail, has proven difficult to determine availability. DAG Elgart was open to this shift in scheduling method but it would require input of the missing Subcommittee members. As consolation, she encouraged the Subcommittee to discuss their availability as it would provide a broad understanding of what dates would be available. After the Subcommittee shared their availability, DAG Elgart informed she would continue on this item by sending available time blocks in light of the discussion had while providing opportunity to the missing members input.

8. Adjourn

At the end of the meeting, DAG Elgart thanked the Subcommittee and DAG Soliman for their participation at today's meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.