

Phoenix Police Department

National Police Foundation
Recommendations and Implementation



Police Chief Jeri L. Williams



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Implementation Plan

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MISSION STATEMENT

To serve, protect and reduce crime in Phoenix while treating everyone with dignity and respect.

NPF Implementation Plan

A Message from Police Chief Jeri L. Williams

As everyone in our community is aware, 2018 marked an unprecedented time for our police department and our community.

From January 1 through December 31, 2018, Phoenix police officers were involved in 44 critical incidents, in which they fired their duty weapons, known as an Officer Involved Shooting (OIS). This was a significant increase from years past and as the year unfolded it was abundantly clear that we wanted to get to the bottom of why these incidents were occurring at such a high frequency.

It was during this time that I asked the Mayor and City Council to request a neutral third-party to come in and research the factors that were directly correlated to the increase in our OIS incidents. As I have stated before, the safety of our community and officers is the foundation of this Department.

The National Police Foundation (NPF) answered the call and conducted a six-month study on the potential relationships and factors responsible for the increased OIS incidents.

Through the review, they provided nine (9) recommendations in their comprehensive report, which our Department is committed towards implementing in the short-, mid- and long- term strategic planning of our organization in an effort to remain the most forward-focused, progressive police department in the country, serving and protecting our City in the best way possible.

**Jeri L. Williams, Police Chief
Phoenix Police Department**



Implementation Plan

Findings

While the National Police Foundation produced their own stand alone report, the following findings were highlighted directly through their analysis:

- 2018 saw an increase in assaults on officers, specifically involving firearms. Based on the data gathered, the increase of assaults on officers began in 2017; however, incidents involving firearms doubled in 2018. While the assaults on officers did increase, there are many assaults on officers and armed subject encounters each year that do not become OIS incidents, so there are other factors that must be considered.**
- The increase in OIS events was not limited to the City of Phoenix, but other communities throughout the Valley.**
- While the OIS incidents did not reach the same numbers as were seen in 2018, 2013 and 2016 also exceeded the 10-year mean of OIS incidents in Phoenix.**
- The National Police Foundation found that the PPD Executive Staff have taken many reasonable steps to strengthen both policy and training. The evidence suggests that neither policy or training were flawed or misguided.**
- Discussions with the participating community members and review of PPD actions revealed a lack of transparency on the part of PPD and a lack of trust between PPD and the participating community members that may be inhibiting transparency.**

Implementation Plan

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Document when officers point their guns at a person/s.

This data-driven recommendation by the NPF compares other large agencies across the nation and finds that there are significantly lower rates of fatal OIS incidents, where this mandate has been applied. Other large agencies that employ this kind of documentation are Dallas, Baltimore, Cleveland, New Orleans and Chicago Police Departments.

Implementation Strategy: Short Term (0-6 months)

Documenting each time a firearm is drawn by a police officer and pointed at a person in Phoenix will be a major paradigm shift for officers of any rank. In addition to making the changes within the Records Management System (RMS), this recommendation will require policy change as well as consistent messaging throughout the Department to ensure its successful implementation.

In November 2018, members of the RMS team and Training Bureau began looking at ways to improve the Use of Force reporting within the RMS. Due to this foresight, the ability to meet the time frame of this recommendation can be significantly reduced according to the vendor.

Efforts will also be made to connect with some of the larger agencies listed above to determine the best practices for implementing this recommendation. This newly captured information can then be utilized by the Training Bureau, as well as the officers' immediate supervisor for training and accountability purposes.



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Implementation Plan

Recommendations

Recommendation 2: Improve consistency in data collected for periodic analysis of officer involved shootings.



The collection of OIS data has shifted several times over the course of the previous years leading up to and including 2018. While NPF recognizes that the “OIS Matrix” has been changed to offer opportunity for improvements in captured data, NPF also recognizes some inconsistencies in data gathered, specifically relating to toxicology.

Implementation Strategy: Long Term (12+ Months)

Leading up to 2018, the OIS Matrix was handled by the Inspections Detail housed in the Professional Standards Bureau. During 2018, the decision was made to have the Training Bureau be responsible for the documentation of the data collection, at which time modifications were made to the OIS Matrix itself for better efficiency. Currently, the data that is collected is purely dependent on the Violent Crimes Bureau investigators and what information they provide through the course of their investigation.

In addition, with improvements to capturing better Use of Force data pending for the RMS, more information and transparency should be available internally and externally.

Best practices would suggest that a better checks and balances approach occur prior to the final OIS Matrix being submitted and housed with the Crime Analysis and Research Unit (CARU). This will allow for more in-depth analysis of OIS incidents to assist in the Department’s transparency with the community, as well as understanding and adapting to the most significant factors for training purposes. A small committee will be set up between the Training Bureau, the Violent Crimes Bureau, and CARU to determine the most efficient way to collect the data moving forward, with an implementation plan presented to the Chief.

Implementation Plan

Recommendations

Recommendation 3: Continue to improve training.

PPD has made significant changes to its in-service training program and implemented a new version of its Use of Force Options training, incorporating squad-based training and on-line prerequisite courses to leverage training value. The following are multiple recommendations that will be implemented in the short- and mid-term.



- **Recommendation 3.1: Consider developing and implementing the ability to track the completion of online learning prior to active sessions.**

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

The successful implementation of e-Learning was new to PPD in 2018. Since that time, many updates and upgrades have occurred within the system. In working with the e-Learning team, there is current uncertainty if the same e-Learning platform will be utilized moving into the future, based on what the City's Information Technology Services Department decides to push forward for the entire City of Phoenix to use.

Whether a new or existing system, the e-Learning team will determine a way to cross check attendees going to proficiency skills training prior to attending the on-line prerequisite course. This is an important step to continue to build accountability into training, while leveraging technology through the e-Learning platform.

By doing so, each student will be accountable for the information in the prerequisite courses, that can then be placed into application for the proficiency skills training they are receiving in person.

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Implementation Plan

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 3.2:** Consider developing and implementing a formal evaluation of the new training being implemented by PPD.

Implementation Strategy: Long Term (12+ Months)

This particular recommendation is important as to the final result. If the goal of the training is to allow for better outcomes based on decision making through scenario-based training and the use of all force options, the goal would be to see the appropriate measures utilized in real-world environments.

Thus, it is important to analyze the training through a more formal approach, as denoted by this NPF recommendation.

Arizona State University (ASU) would be a significant partner in this area and further discussion needs to occur in order to determine the best way to formally evaluate current and future advanced training.

- **Recommendation 3.3:** Increase the repetition of social interaction and force-based training opportunities.

Implementation Strategy: Short Term (0-6 Months)

By leveraging the newly developed e-Learning platform, in conjunction with the technological advancements in VirTra and similar training simulators, this recommendation can be easily accommodated over the next six months. Prior to the release of the NPF review, the Training Bureau was already in the process of creating new training to address issues related to “furtive” movements.

Utilizing the VirTra and decision making simulators allows for a significant increase in repetition and will also satisfy Recommendation 3.5, which can be replicated through the creation of Phoenix-specific scenarios with the vendors.

Fulfilling this recommendation will give sworn personnel the ability to run through multiple iterations of the scenario, while being challenged in their decision making and critical thinking abilities prior to a situation escalating.

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Implementation Plan

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 3.4:** Further leverage debriefings as the key to attaining learning objectives from each of the scenarios used in training.

Implementation Strategy: Short Term (0-6 Months)



Since the visit from the NPF occurred, the Training Bureau has made changes to incorporate more in depth debriefings of training scenarios to leverage more learning opportunities for the officers. More importantly, the Training Bureau has been working hard to provide an environment where honest debriefings can happen so that officers feel that they can voice their mistakes in the training environment without ridicule.

- **Recommendation 3.5:** Consider better aligning or balancing scenario selection and training format with the more common scenarios observed in PPD's OIS data, such as single officer incidents versus group incidents.

Implementation Strategy: Short Term (0-6 Months)

As previously discussed in Recommendation 3.3, leveraging the technology and training aids that the Department currently owns can significantly increase the repetitions each officer receives per year, but also can be adjusted for trends that are being observed in OIS incidents.

The current force options training that each patrol squad is attending incorporates multiple situations that were actually faced by Phoenix police officers throughout 2018 before the training was developed.

Future training will also incorporate "real life" situations that will mimic the incidents and trends that officers are observing on the streets and will continue to incorporate handling situations with people in a state of mental crisis.

Implementation Plan

Recommendations

Recommendation 4: Increase transparency through the sharing of data and information with the community.

The community's perspective is important to understanding the dynamic between the police and the community it serves. While PPD has made strides in sharing information through the open data portal, the data sets are limited in detail and years available. Additionally, more can and should be done to improve transparency around policies and policy change. NPF recognizes that the recommendations made in reference to Recommendation #4 need to comport to Arizona law and PPD's ability to increase its capacity in its crime analysis (staffing) and procurement of a new National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)-compliant records management system.

- **Recommendation 4.1: PPD should make available a full 10 years of use of force data (not limited to OIS events) in an open data format. Data should be updated quarterly on an ongoing basis, if not monthly.**

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

This recommendation would be driven by the Crime Analysis and Research Unit (CARU) and is dependent on the feasibility of exporting data from the current RMS system. Additionally, this data could be posted on the same open data portal that OIS information is currently displayed on, which would include the assistance of the City of Phoenix Information Technology Services Department personnel.



- **Recommendation 4.2: In addition to use of force and crime data, PPD should provide multiple years of open data sets in reference to assaults on officers (to include injuries sustained), officer training requirements, complaints, Professional Standards Bureau (PSB) case data and other data sets to increase transparency.**

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

As with Recommendation 4.1, this recommendation would be driven by the Crime Analysis and Research Unit (CARU) and the Professional Standards Bureau. Any data sets shared would have to comport with Arizona law.

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Implementation Plan

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 4.3:** PPD should not only release the data as discussed in Recommendations 4.1/4.2, but should announce its availability to the community and participate in joint events with the community to review, analyze, and improve data sets.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)



The strengthening of our relationship with the community and strategic partners could not be more important as PPD and the community move forward together. This recommendation ties in directly with the current Traumatic Incident Intervention Resources (TIIR) Ad Hoc Committee Co-Chaired by Councilman Michael Nowakowski and Councilwoman Laura Pastor, along with

Councilwoman Vania Guevara. These joint meetings could be handled semi-annually (or more frequently) in conjunction with the release of the Mid-Year and Year in Review Tactical Review Committee publications on OIS Incidents.

- **Recommendation 4.4:** Prior to releasing certain draft policies, PPD should work with community partners in the creation and/or updating policy.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

To accomplish this recommendation, members of the Chief's Advisory Boards would be utilized to review and comment on pending policy creations or updates, prior to being staffed. While some issues are not subject to input and are determined by law or are otherwise necessary for officer safety, other issues may be more discretionary and open for input.



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Implementation Plan

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 4.5:** PPD should provide a clear explanation of its internal accountability mechanisms and how PSB operates. This explanation should include how PSB initiates an investigation independently versus an investigation that is referred or initiated via complaint. This should also include data recommended previously (Recommendation 4.2), as well as the criteria for initiating a PSB review.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

This recommendation will be accomplished by posting a detailed description of PSB processes on the Department's public web page, as well as flyers that will be posted at every Precinct building. Additionally, a short video segment could also be posted online from the PSB Commander, indicating how the steps should be handled and what to do if a community member would like to initiate a complaint.

Recommendation 5: As transparency and accountability are increased, meaningful community engagement must be undertaken beyond PPD-selected advisory groups and participation.

The NPF noted that there were multiple instances where officers and the community were generally in agreement and together could improve outcomes and understanding. The effort between the police and the community must be jointly developed before, during, and after OIS incidents occur.

- **Recommendation 5.1:** PPD should take advantage of a no-cost community survey to understand community sentiment across Phoenix neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

A community survey would be sent out in conjunction with the Public Affairs Bureau through Survey Monkey or similar application to capture and benchmark the sentiment of the Phoenix population. This could also be used to compare against other agencies of similar size.



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Implementation Plan

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 5.2:** PPD should also incorporate a survey to measure police-community interactions, thereby measuring how community members perceive their interactions with officers.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

This recommendation is very similar to that of Recommendation 5.1 and could be incorporated into the same survey to the community. If a separate survey is needed, a link could be provided to the separate survey on Victim's Rights pamphlets, citations, or other printed documents of the Phoenix Police Department that members of the community receive.

- **Recommendation 5.3:** PPD should implement an officer survey to collect officer views of community receptivity, feelings of safety and risk, as well as officer views of internal support and accountability.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

This recommendation can be accomplished using the same strategy as Recommendations 5.1/5.2. To accomplish this with the highest participation rate, the survey should be created in conjunction with the labor unions to include the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association (PLEA) and the Phoenix Police Sergeants and Lieutenants Association (PPSLA).

- **Recommendation 5.4:** PPD should seek opportunities for community engagement through various national programs.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

While not perfect, the relationship between the community and the police department have been on the radar for some time now. Starting with the Community Engagement and Outreach Task Force and moving into the Community and Police Trust Initiative, PPD has made strides to engage the community. Prior to the release of the NPF report, PPD already began the process of working with the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, to build a framework with all of our community partners to co-create a stronger and more unified Phoenix through effective engagement. Over the next several months, this will continue to be explored and implemented to create a forward-focused relationship with the community.

Implementation Plan

Recommendations

Recommendation 6: Increase the presence of proactive police units.

NPF documented research that revealed proactive policing strategies have the ability to reduce crime rates. According to the research, focusing time and energy into proactive policing strategies must be focused and targeted. Strategies that focus on specific people/groups, crime types, and specific street segments stand the best chance of success.



Implementation Strategy: Long Term (12+ Months)

The increasing of personnel back into specialty details focused on crime suppression strategies must be intentional and focused. As Department resources begin to grow again with increased hiring and retention of current officers, proactive policing units can once again be staffed to appropriate levels.

Once fully staffed, these details should develop crime suppression strategies based on intelligence-led policing techniques that will help guide officers to specific “hot spot” geographical areas and to specific “repeat” offenders.

While this will allow for targeted enforcement of criminal behavior, it should not be lost that these strategies must be done in conjunction with the community, requiring joint engagement from both the police and the community at large.

Recommendation 7: Conduct a staffing study to determine if PPD has sufficient officers to respond to calls for service demands and provide adequate back-up for responding officers.

Implementation Strategy: Mid-Term (6-12 Months)

The majority of this information as recommended by NPF has already been gathered and disseminated to City Council. This has led to an increase in hiring and the known value of trying to retain officers who are already in the organization. To ensure the numbers are accurate, CARU should re-calculate and submit new numbers to the Executive Staff, if needed.

Implementation Plan

Recommendations

Recommendation 8: Revamping the current Records Management System (RMS).

NPF recognized that PPD's current RMS system will become more and more challenging moving into the future, especially as systems need to be NIBRS compliant. Having a system that is difficult and outdated could significantly affect the way that data is managed, analyzed, and released for reporting and transparency purposes.

Implementation Strategy: Long Term (12+ Months)

PPD is well aware of the pitfalls of the current RMS system and has actively been working with the vendor to modernize the system. A team of experts within the Department has been evaluating the current system, and found that a new system will be warranted in the future.

This will allow for greater data management, analysis, and reporting to our community members and law enforcement partners. The overarching goal is to have a system that will allow for the greatest transparency to the community and functionality for the Department.

Recommendation 9: Dealing with mental health issues, crisis response, and treatment needs in the community.

There was significant agreement between the participating community members and participating officers about the prevalence of mental health issues and law enforcement involvement. Both parties agreed that the police were not the best equipped to handle these types of incidents. While PPD has made strides in this area, the City and PPD should consider additional options and treatment resources.



Implementation Strategy: Short Term (0-6 Months)

The NPF urged the City of Phoenix to take the lead in this recommendation. PPD has already been trying to handle the growing mental health crisis with the implementation of Crisis Intervention Teams and trained officers, as well as developing partnerships with behavioral health groups. PPD also has a Cross-Disability Advisory Board that gives feedback and advice regularly to the Department for the purpose of bettering the police response. City leadership is committed to strategically creating partnerships and leveraging additional resources to better deal with the mental health issues, crisis response and treatment needs in our community. The City of Phoenix will continue to search for best practices on how to best handle these incidents.

Implementation Plan

Conclusion

Through the comprehensive review of the National Police Foundation, nine (9) recommendations were made, which the Phoenix Police Department has already either begun the process of working on or already implemented to try and solve the addressed issue.

Despite the record-number of OIS incidents that occurred last year in Phoenix, PPD did not become lackadaisical. Throughout the year, staff throughout the Department were constantly trying to figure out what could be done better, either through operational response or training.

The relationship we hold with our community is vitally important to a better and stronger Phoenix, and we look forward with anticipation to working with our community partners to ensure that the recommendations put forth throughout the review by the National Police Foundation can become institutionalized in our processes and procedures moving forward.

We would like to thank the National Police Foundation for their thoughtful and comprehensive review of our organization and our community. They have provided an excellent roadmap for success as we move forward.

If you would like to review the full report by the National Police Foundation, it can be located at the link below:

www.policefoundation.org



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Implementation Plan



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