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THE ROLE OF THE IPA

The Independent Police Auditor (IPA) serves as an independent oversight resource for the City of San Leandro and works collaboratively with the Community Police Review Board (CPRB) to promote accountability, transparency, and public trust in policing. The IPA reports directly to the City Manager and is responsible for reviewing police operations, conducting audits, evaluating complaint investigations, and providing recommendations designed to improve police services and strengthen community confidence.

The IPA's responsibilities include:

- Review of all complaint investigations, including both citizen and internally generated complaints
- Direct receipt of complaints from community members
- Review of critical incidents
- Review of all reported uses of force and vehicle pursuits
- Audits of complaints, discipline, policies, and training
- Analysis of data collected pursuant to the California Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)
- Audits of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) usage
- Independent investigations as assigned by the City Manager
- Public reporting regarding oversight activities

FOUNDATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The IPA's oversight approach is grounded in the principle of continuous improvement. Effective police accountability systems should not focus solely on identifying misconduct, but also on recognizing opportunities to improve policies, training, supervision, and organizational performance. Through independent review and collaboration with City leadership, the Police Department, and the CPRB, the IPA seeks to support a culture of professionalism, constitutional policing, transparency, and community trust.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The IPA maintains regular communication with City leadership, the Police Department, and the CPRB. Throughout the reporting period, the IPA attended CPRB meetings, met regularly with City staff and Police Department leadership, and participated in ongoing discussions regarding oversight priorities, policy development, community concerns, and organizational improvements.

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The IPA conducts regular meetings with Police Department leadership to discuss use-of-force reviews, vehicle pursuits, complaint investigations, and other significant matters. These meetings provide opportunities to review findings, discuss recommendations, and develop agreed-upon corrective actions where appropriate.

SUPPORT TO THE COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW BOARD

The IPA serves as a subject matter resource to the CPRB by providing technical expertise regarding police practices, complaint investigations, policy review, accountability systems, and oversight best practices. The IPA assists with Board training, provides updates regarding oversight activities, responds to Board inquiries, and supports the CPRB's policy review responsibilities. This reporting period, the IPA created a self-paced training curriculum that included

DIRECT RECEIPT OF COMPLAINTS

The IPA continues to provide community members with independent avenues for filing complaints regarding Police Department personnel. Complaints may be submitted directly to the IPA through its website, email, or through referrals from the CPRB.

When complaints are received, the IPA ensures they are appropriately documented, referred for investigation when necessary, and monitored throughout the investigative process.

INCIDENT REVIEW PROCESS

The IPA utilizes a comprehensive "360-degree review" process when evaluating uses of force, pursuits, complaints, and other significant incidents. Reviews examine compliance with Department policy, applicable law, supervisory oversight, officer decision-making, professionalism, communication, tactical considerations, and opportunities for improvement.

This review process is intended to identify both strengths and areas for growth, helping the Department address issues through coaching, mentoring, policy refinement, and training before they develop into larger organizational concerns.

REVIEW OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Critical incidents are defined to include all officer-involved shooting incidents, regardless of whether the person was injured; traffic collisions involving police officers that result in death or serious bodily injury to another person; uses of force resulting in death or serious bodily injury to another person; and all deaths of persons occurring while the deceased was in the custodial care of the police department. The IPA is charged with review of all officer-involved shooting

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incidents and all other critical incidents investigations to determine if the investigation was complete, thorough, objective, and fair. Additionally, SLPD is obligated to provide the IPA with timely notification of all critical incidents to provide the IPA with the ability to observe the scene at the IPA's discretion.

SLPD and the IPA established a mechanism for SLPD to notify the IPA in a timely manner when a critical incident occurs. There was one critical incident that was reviewed during the latest IPA reporting period. The results of that review were shared with the Department, with recommendations for improvement in a variety of different areas.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

The Independent Police Auditor continued to expand its oversight activities during the reporting period, providing independent review of police operations, complaint investigations, policy implementation, and accountability systems.

During the IPA's latest annual reporting period, covering October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025, the IPA reviewed a total of 265 incidents, including:

- 73 uses of force;
- 147 vehicle pursuits;
- 18 completed complaint investigations; and
- 27 additional incidents reviewed as part of audits and special oversight activities.

The implementation of the Department's new case management system significantly improved the efficiency and timeliness of the review process and enabled the IPA to eliminate a backlog of previously pending cases. As a result, the number of incidents reviewed increased substantially compared to prior reporting periods.

The IPA issued a total of 89 recommendations relating to policies, supervision, training, documentation, and operational practices. These recommendations were developed collaboratively with Police Department leadership through an "Agreed Upon Course of Action" process designed to promote continuous improvement and organizational learning. The Police Department accepted all recommendations and has either implemented them or is in the process of implementation.

USE OF FORCE REVIEWS

The IPA reviewed 73 uses of force incidents during the latest IPA reporting period, including one officer-involved shooting and 11 incidents that also involved vehicle pursuits.

The reviews found that officers generally acted professionally and within Department policy. While no use-of-force incidents were determined to be out of policy, the IPA identified

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opportunities for improvement and issued 18 recommendations arising from 12 incidents. Recommendations focused on officer tactics, supervisory review processes, policy clarification, documentation, and training.

The IPA also identified several examples of exemplary police work involving effective de-escalation, teamwork, communication, tactical decision-making, and restraint under challenging circumstances. In addition, four incidents were identified as valuable training opportunities for department-wide learning.

VEHICLE PURSUIT REVIEWS

The IPA reviewed 147 vehicle pursuits during the latest IPA reporting period. While many pursuits were handled appropriately, several reviews identified policy violations and opportunities for improvement related to pursuit initiation, supervision, documentation, and risk assessment.

As a result of these reviews, the IPA issued 66 recommendations involving 40 pursuit incidents. These recommendations contributed to ongoing discussions regarding the Department's pursuit policy and appropriate balancing of public safety concerns with law enforcement objectives.

The review process also led to interim policy modifications and ongoing collaboration among the Police Department, the CPRB, and the IPA regarding comprehensive revisions to the Department's pursuit policy.

COMPLAINT REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The IPA reviewed 18 completed complaint investigations involving allegations of misconduct by Police Department personnel during the latest IPA reporting period.

The purpose of these reviews was to ensure that investigations were complete, objective, thorough, fair, and supported by the available evidence. Reviews included examination of investigative reports, witness interviews, body-worn camera footage, findings, and disciplinary outcomes where applicable.

The IPA also continued to provide independent avenues for community members to submit complaints directly through the IPA website, email, and referrals from the CPRB.

POLICY, TRAINING, AND AUDIT FUNCTIONS

In addition to reviewing individual incidents, the IPA conducted broader assessments of Department operations, policies, training programs, and accountability.

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During the latest IPA reporting period, the IPA reviewed policies related to use of force, pursuits, body-worn cameras, automated license plate readers, and other operational practices. The IPA also analyzed data collected pursuant to the California Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) and conducted a Detailed Analysis of Tour Activity (DATA) audit designed to identify trends, training opportunities, and areas for organizational improvement.

These activities support the City's commitment to transparency, constitutional policing, continuous improvement, and community trust.

CONCLUSION

The City's hybrid oversight model combines the independent review functions of the IPA with the community engagement and policy review responsibilities of the CPRB. Together, these two bodies help strengthen transparency, accountability, and public trust while supporting the Police Department's ongoing commitment to professional, constitutional, and community-oriented policing.

The IPA appreciates the cooperation of City leadership, the San Leandro Police Department, and the CPRB, and remains committed to fostering continuous improvement, organizational learning, and public confidence in law enforcement.