

Finding 25

The PPD lacks a comprehensive scenario playbook that includes a diverse set of scenarios relevant to policing in Philadelphia.

The PPD is one of the largest law enforcement agencies in the country, where officers encounter a diverse collection of calls for service and individuals during their time as officers. These situations include persons in mental crises, foot pursuits in high-crime areas, and animals, among many others. Similarly, officers who have not previously spent much time in an urban environment are confronted with situations and individuals that are unfamiliar to them, adding yet another layer of complexity to their decision-making process.

Recommendation 25.1

The PPD should develop a catalog of scenarios based on real-world incidents experienced by PPD officers and other officers across the country.

A comprehensive scenario playbook or catalog would expose officers to a wide range of scenarios, increasing the likelihood that they will be familiar with a situation when they encounter it on duty. The playbook would also allow trainers to better assess an officer's abilities and help target any potential problem areas.

The playbook should include a variety of scenarios relevant to a large urban jurisdiction with particular attention to scenarios that focus on the following areas:

- **Foot pursuits.** Our review of the department's officer-involved shooting (OIS) incidents reveals that a 33 percent of OISs involved a foot pursuit. Scenarios should be developed that indicate the hazards associated with foot pursuits and that allow the trainer to analyze how the officer weighs the decision to pursue a suspect versus the potential danger to the officer (e.g., the officer loses sight of the subject and the possibility of an ambush).
- **Diversity.** Philadelphia is a diverse city comprising many cultures and ethnicities. Scenarios should reflect this and place officers in an environment in which they are interacting with individuals of different ethnicities.
- **PPD OIS.** As part of their return-to-duty training, officers are presented with a scenario that is similar to the incident they encountered while on duty. In each such instance, the PPD should document that scenario as a potential learning opportunity for other officers.

- **Threat perception failures.** Officers should train in scenarios that allow them to hone their threat perception skills and better identify behavior such as “waistband-tugging” where no weapons are present and avoid mistaking cell phones or other shiny objects as firearms. As a whole, the department shot 29 unarmed suspects in TPFs between 2007 and 2013, accounting for 8 percent of all OISs in that time period.
- **De-escalation.** Officers should be exposed to scenarios that allow them to exercise verbal persuasion and interpersonal communication skills with an agitated suspect.

It is critical that the department include scenarios that are not intended to be resolved using deadly force. In addition, all training scenarios should be carefully vetted against department policy to ensure that they do not conflict with one another.

Recommendation 25.2

Officer performance in training should be recorded as a way to track officer progress across the department and flag any tactical issues that may require additional targeted training.

In conjunction with the development of the scenario playbook, a rubric for grading officer performance in the scenarios should also be developed. During training, officers should be graded on each scenario with results entered into a PPD electronic training record-keeping system, thereby enabling the department to analyze and proactively address any department-wide or officer-specific tactical deficiencies.¹⁴⁰

Recommendation 25.3

The PPD should review its training on animal shootings to ensure they are consistent with the community expectations while considering factors affecting officer safety.

The PPD is involved in an average of 30 animal-related OISs per year. Nationally, there has been great concern generated by excessive animal shootings by law enforcement officers. To this end, some states have enacted legislation specifically designed to address this issue. Given the large number of PPD OISs involving animals, including family pets, it is recommended that the PPD review its policies on animal shootings to ensure they are consistent with community expectations and that they limit the shooting of family pets.

Finding 26

The PPD does not have a recertification program for CIT.

Officers who were interviewed consistently lauded the CIT as some of the most valuable training they received during their time with the PPD, citing the verbal skills learned as helping diffuse crisis situations. Nearly half of the PPD’s patrol officers have completed the training—far more than the widely used standard of 25 percent. However, the department does not have a recertification requirement or process in place. Officers receive the training just once.

140. George Fachner, *TRAINSTAT: Establishing a Training Statistics Program in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department* (Arlington, VA: CNA, 2013).