

CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE



2021

Internal Affairs Annual Report

*Submitted by the Bureau of Professional Standards and Compliance
April 2022*



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE



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2021 Internal Affairs Unit Annual Report

The Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) is the state's primary Executive Branch agency for law enforcement and public safety. As of December 31, 2021, DESPP was comprised of one thousand five hundred thirty-seven (1,537) employees, including nine hundred eight (908) sworn members, four hundred forty-seven (447) full-time civilian members, and one hundred eighty-two (182) part-time civilian members. DESPP consists of six divisions. They are:

- 1) Division of State Police (CSP), the state's largest law enforcement agency.
- 2) Division of Scientific Services (DSS), also known as the State Forensic Laboratory.
- 3) Division of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS).
- 4) Division of Police Officer Standards & Training Council (POST).
- 5) Division of Fire Prevention & Control/Connecticut Fire Academy.
- 6) Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications (DSET).

Due to the unique and varied nature of the agency, the Internal Affairs Unit (IA) within the Bureau of Professional Standards and Compliance is responsible for the receipt, categorization, and tracking of all complaints concerning misconduct by any of the department's employees including volunteers, interns, and auxiliary troopers. The Internal Affairs Unit investigates both criminal and non-criminal complaints implicating sworn personnel as well as criminal complaints against civilian staff. Per department policy, the Labor Relations Unit investigates complaints specifically alleging non-criminal misconduct by civilian employees. Where it is determined that an employee is culpable, IA forwards the investigative file to the Labor Relations Unit for review to determine discipline. In sum, the Internal Affairs Unit is the standard flag bearer in protecting the integrity of the agency by means of its impartial and thorough investigations. In addition to investigations outlined above, the Internal Affairs Unit will conduct Internal Affairs investigations for outside police agencies. This is done only after a formal request is made by the Chief of Police of the outside agency and approval from the Commissioner of DESPP.

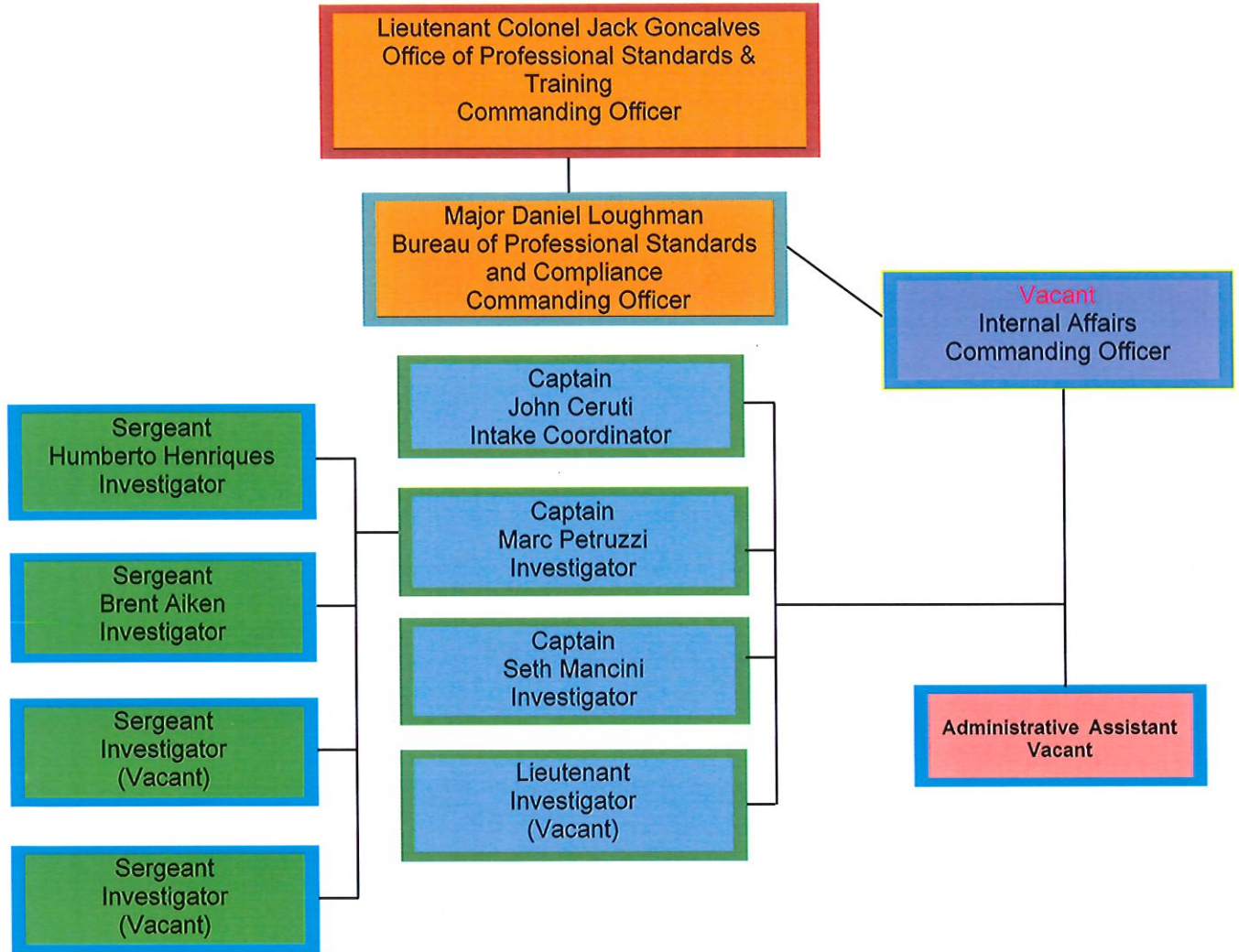
Lieutenant Colonel Michael O'Donnell is currently the Commanding Officer of the Office of Professional Standards and Training, and Major Daniel Loughman is currently the Commanding Officer of the Bureau of Professional Standards and Compliance. As provided in the agency's A&O Manual, a Lieutenant Colonel heads the office, reports operationally to the Colonel, and regularly briefs the DESPP Commissioner. The organizational chart for the Internal Affairs Unit follows immediately.



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The Internal Affairs Unit strives to provide the best service possible. IA accomplishes this through detailed investigations incorporating and respecting the importance of due process, constitutional protections, and employee rights as provided through collective bargaining. The public image and integrity of DESPP depends upon it. The Internal Affairs Unit responds to all allegations of misconduct and conducts thorough, thoughtful, and impartial investigations based on objective and quantifiable facts. In addition to the responsibility of verifying and documenting allegations when warranted, the Internal Affairs Unit is also responsible for the protection of employees from false allegations, a charge that all of the members of the unit take seriously. The Internal Affairs Unit prides itself on its contributions to the agency and our field, holding ourselves to the highest professional standards and policing ourselves to ensure all staff's conduct is exemplary both on and off duty.



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In addition to the investigation of allegations of employee misconduct, the Internal Affairs Unit conducts investigations at the request of local authorities including constables or police officers under the supervision of CSP's Resident State Trooper program.

Feedback from the public is essential to our success and the public's satisfaction. The Internal Affairs Unit maintains a web-based email system affording the public opportunity to convey their concerns, complaints, and compliments about members of the workforce online, and to inquire about department operations and offer their opinions and suggestions at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DESPP/Division-of-State-Police/old/Citizens-Guide-to-Making-Commendations-and-Complaints>. The unit's Intake Coordinator has direct and immediate access to these emails and can respond remotely to emergencies and any other situations in need of immediate attention.

The Office of Professional Standards also operates a complaint hotline at 877-746-1922 as another means by which the public can convey its concerns.

Complaint Classifications

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection assigns its internal administrative investigations to one of three categories: (1) *Complaint (C#)*; (2) *Administrative Inquiry (AI)*; and (3) *Internal Affairs Investigation (IA)*.

The Internal Affairs Unit handles two other types of administrative contacts. They are: (1) *Miscellaneous Inquiries (M#)* and (2) *Commendations/Praise (P#)*.

It is possible that the focus of an initial contact changes over time, in which case the investigation can be escalated to a higher classification.

(1) COMPLAINT (C#)

The initial category assigned to an internal investigation is determined by the apparent circumstances of the complaint and is tracked by its Complaint Number (C#). Complaints of a less serious nature that do not rise to the level of an AI or IA usually remain at the "C#" level subject to the determination of the Commanding Officer of Internal Affairs.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY (AI)

An Administrative Inquiry (AI) is a complaint that, if sustained, would result in no more than the first level of discipline permitted, which is a Letter of Reprimand.



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(3) INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATIONS (IA)

An Internal Affairs Investigation is a complaint that, if sustained, could result in more severe discipline, up to and including termination. The underlying incident may involve conduct, which if proven, could result in the filing of one or more criminal charges. Examples of these incidents include the improper discharge of a firearm, bias allegations, sexual harassment claims, civil rights violations, and employee actions that result in death or serious physical injury.

As noted above, the unit addresses two other types of administrative contacts: Miscellaneous Inquiries (M#) and Commendations or Praise (P#).

(1) MISCELLANEOUS INQUIRIES (M#)

Miscellaneous Inquiries encompass a variety of lesser concerns not otherwise suitable for treatment within the IA, AI, C# or P# classifications. The Unit documents Miscellaneous Inquiries with an M tracking number. Examples of Miscellaneous Inquiries include complaints unrelated to DESPP that are in turn forwarded to an outside agency, or an inquiry that requires referral to a different unit within the agency. The miscellaneous designation is also used in instances where a complaint does not fall into any of the three complaint classifications, and in instances where certain minor policy violations are discovered in the course of an IA, AI, or C# investigation.

M# classifications may also be used for instances where a complaint can be reviewed by the Intake Coordinator and/or his/her designee, by way of any audio or video recordings, reports or records and it is determined that the complaint is unfounded, the violation is minor in nature and further inquiry would not produce additional information or it is determined that a formal investigation is not warranted.

(2) COMMENDATION/PRAISE (P#)

Commendations and Praise are the contacts that the Internal Affairs Unit receives concerning exemplary behavior or service displayed by a sworn or civilian employee.

ANALYSIS of 2021 DATA

During the 2021 calendar year, the Internal Affairs Unit received seventy-five (75) complaints concerning both sworn and civilian DESPP personnel and constables/police officers under the supervision of the Resident State Trooper program. Of the seventy-five (75) complaints forty (40) of the complaints were originated by citizens outside of the agency. Of these complaints, IA determined thirty (30) constituted serious allegations of



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misconduct and were designated as Internal Affairs Investigations or Administrative Inquiries. The remaining forty-five (45) complaints were less serious in nature and as such, were investigated as Complaint Investigations (C#s). The Internal Affairs Unit did not receive any requests from outside police departments to conduct Internal Affairs investigations on their personnel in 2021.

Of the thirty (30) internal investigations conducted, the Internal Affairs Unit classified twenty-six (26) as Internal Affairs (IA) cases and four (4) as Administrative Inquiries (AI). The thirty (30) investigations reflect a decrease from fifty-eight (58) investigations in 2020, a 28% decrease.

Dispositions: Of the thirty (30) serious investigations, both IA and AI, in 2021, twenty-eight (28) cases resulted in disciplinary charges sustained and in one (1) case the allegations were exonerated or not sustained. The remaining case (1) case was still open and under investigation when this report was prepared. Twenty-three (23) of the investigations involved sworn members of CSP, two (2) of the investigations involved constables or/police officers under the supervision of CSP's Resident State Trooper program, and five (5) of the investigations involved civilian employees as a subject of the investigation.

Of the forty-five (45) lower-level complaint investigations classified as a "C" number, eighteen (18) of the cases were closed with a substantiated finding resulting in the issuance of a Performance Observation Report, counseling, remedial training, or a combination of the three. Thirty-nine (39) of the investigations involved sworn members of CSP, two (2) of the investigations involved constables or/police officers under the supervision of CSP's Resident State Trooper program, and five (5) of the investigations involved civilian employees as a subject of the investigation.

The number of complaints classified as "Criminal" decreased from nine (9) in 2020 to five (5) in 2021. The number of complaints concerning "Rules and Regulations" allegations decreased from forty-five (45) in 2020 to twenty-two (22) in 2021. The number of complaints received in 2021 in all other classifications was similar to the numbers reported in 2020. See the tables below for details.

There were one hundred and sixty-seven (167) "Commendations" received in 2021 compared to one hundred and thirty (130) received in 2020.

The Internal Affairs Unit takes every opportunity to be aggressive in educating agency personnel through annual in-service training, newly promoted Sergeant training, as well as recruit training. Additionally, the Internal Affairs Unit also promotes policies that are transparent, clear, and unambiguous. In the rare instance that certain rules of conduct may be unclear or ambiguous, the Internal Affairs Unit provides recommendations



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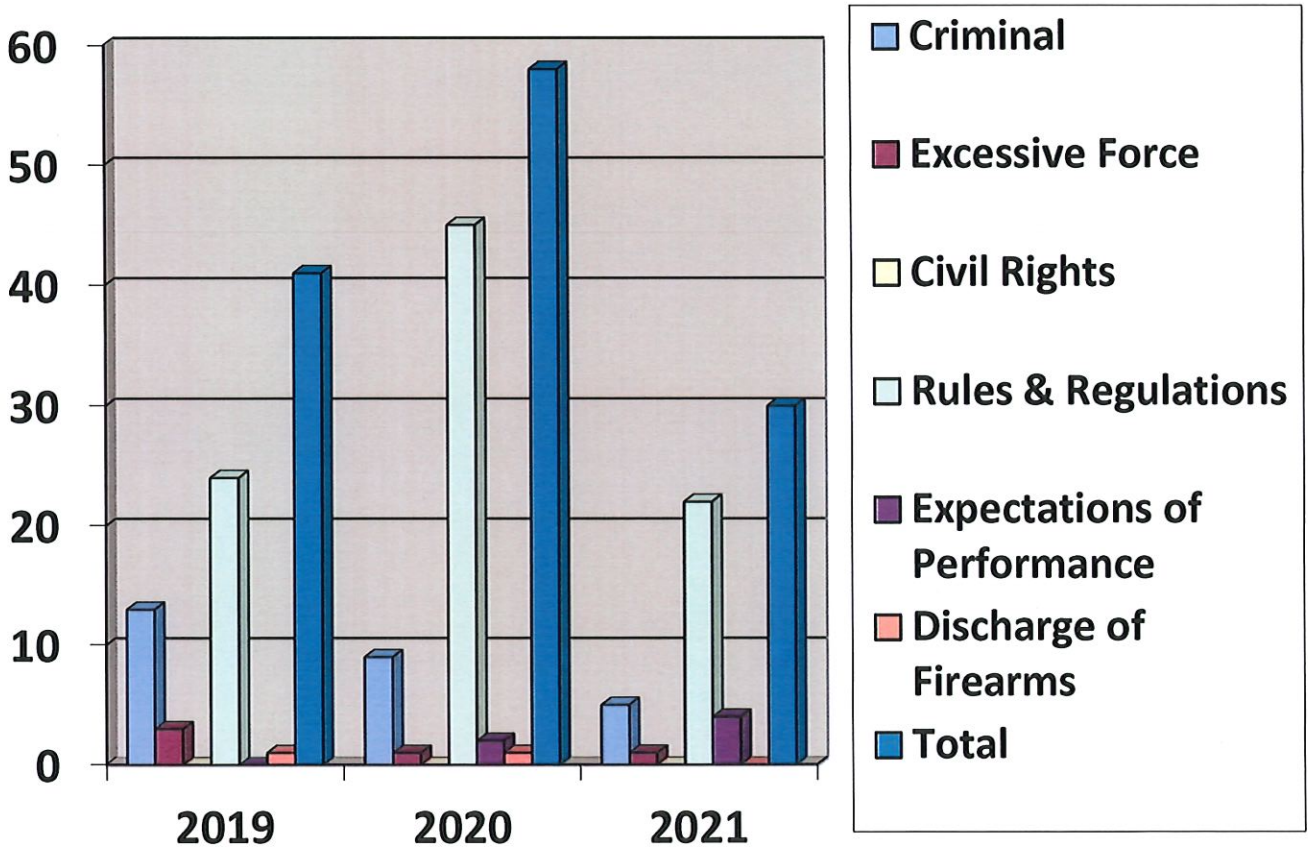


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through the chain of command to remedy this by offering language for the agency's A&O manual that are clear and concise, and consistent with industry best practices.

The nature of the Internal Affairs Unit IA/AI investigations for 2021 is as follows:

	2019	2020	2021
Criminal	13	9	5
Excessive Force	3	1	1
Civil Rights	0	0	0
Rules & Regulations	24	45	22
Expectations of Performance	0	2	4
Discharge of Firearms	1	1	0
Total	41	58	30





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	2019 Cases			2020 Cases			2021 Cases		
	Total	Sustained	Open	Total	Sustained	Open	Total	Sustained	Open
IA	32	23	0	54	48	1	26	25	1
AI	8	5	0	4	4	0	4	4	0
C#	59	15	0	59	19	0	45	18	0

Summary and Conclusion

In total, the Internal Affairs Unit received and processed a combined total of four hundred and forty-six (446) complaints, miscellaneous inquiries, and commendations from the public in 2021. The breakdown by category is as follows:

<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
102 Complaint investigations	75 Complaint investigations
130 Commendations	167 Commendations
234 Miscellaneous Inquiries	204 Miscellaneous Inquiries

Of the seventy-five (75) complaint investigations, the Internal Affairs Unit classified thirty (30) as IA or AI; the remaining forty-five (45) were generally less serious in nature and as such, did not require the same inquiry as the IA or AI investigations. Of the seventy-five (75) complaint investigations, sixty-two (62) of the investigations involved sworn members of CSP, four (4) of the investigations involved constables or/police officers under the supervision of CSP’s Resident State Trooper program, and ten (10) of the investigations involved civilian employees as a subject of the investigation.

Of the thirty (30) serious investigations, both IA and AI, in 2021, twenty-eight (28) cases resulted in disciplinary charges sustained and in one (1) case the allegations were exonerated or not sustained. The remaining case (1) case was still open and under investigation when this report was prepared. Of the forty-five (45) lower-level complaint investigations classified as a “C” number, eighteen (18) of the cases were closed with a substantiated finding resulting in the issuance of a Performance Observation Report, counseling, remedial training, or a combination of the three.

The Internal Affairs Unit communicates with the Commanding Officers at the Troops and Units to take remedial measures and arrange for retraining or coaching when a deficiency is observed. As noted above, there was a decrease in the total number of complaints in the past year as well as in the more serious IA/AI investigations. The data shows there were significantly fewer investigations classified as “Criminal” and “Rules and Regulations” in 2021 as compared to previous years. The number of complaints received in 2021 in all other classifications was similar to the numbers reported in 2020. There



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was also an increase in the number of "Commendations" received in 2021 in comparison to the number received in 2020. The one hundred and sixty-seven (167) "commendations" received is a testament to the excellent work our agency personnel do on a daily basis.

-END-

Approved by:

Major Daniel Loughman
Commanding Officer
Bureau of Professional Standards

Lieutenant Colonel Michael O'Donnell
Commanding Officer
Office of Professional Standards &
Training

Colonel Stavros Mellekas
Commanding Officer
Connecticut State Police

Commissioner James Rovella
Commissioner of DESPP