

CT Hate Crimes Advisory Council

CT Hate Crimes Advisory Council - Subcommittee on Law Enforcement Training and Best Practices

Meeting Minutes

Location: ZOOM

Date/Time: 12-03-2021 @ 1:00pm

Attendees: Gary MacNamara – Chair; Tashun Bowden-Lewis; Duane Lovello; Christopher Ferace; Laura David; Abigail Willauer

Time: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Orders of Business

1. **Welcome and Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of minutes from 11-05-2021**
 - a. Approved
4. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Discuss on barriers to L.E. addressing Hate Crimes**
 - i. **What might they be**

Discussion:

- Hate crimes are infrequent, so officers do not always recognize the magnitude of the crime at the time.
- The public isn't sure where to report a crime and they may not have enough trust in law enforcement to come forward.
- Lack of effective police training.
- No guaranteed uniformity in L.E. in-service training.
 - o Officers are required to go to one hour of training every three years on "bias and bigotry" to meet their POST recertification requirements.
 - o Curriculum is dependent on where you are located and who your instructor is.

- Hate crime charges are often thrown out by prosecutors, which can have rippling effects on the victim community.

ii. How can the barriers be overcome

Discussion:

- Consider implementing a model policy from POST for basic and in-service trainings.
 - o Like POST's Use of Force policy
 - o Be cognizant that adding more hours of training will lessen the ability of accommodating recruits that need to go through the academy & that police policies are already dense.
 - o Write the policy so that any member of the community can read it, not just law enforcement.
- Continue to include prosecutors in POST-regulated trainings to educate officers on CT statutes and the evidence needed to prosecute a crime, especially in regard to hate crimes.
- Apply police resources to not just hate crimes, but also hate incidents.
 - o Like domestic violence response—resources are still applied even when the incident is not arrestable.
 - o Implement some sort of lethality assessment like with domestic violence, that includes a series of questions to ask the victim to assess whether the incident is a hate crime.
- Designate point person(s) in each PD to specialize/coordinate the response and investigation of hate crimes.
 - o All reports go to them immediately for review, making them the pulse of the agency.
 - o Include person/unit on PD websites so the public notices that PD's are taking hate crimes seriously.
 - o Can wear a pin or some other sort of identifier on their uniform so they are identifiable.
 - o Will increase communication and collaboration with prosecutors if there is one point person.
- Policies need to be universal, so that they can be incorporated in both small and large departments.

b. Discussion on Santa Ana Police Department procedures—distributed last meeting

- Document is too broad in scope and a bit complex; Connecticut doesn't have the resources.
- However, the checklist used by Santa Ana PD is excellent—something like this in CT would solve a lot of confusion.
- Hartford had a very comprehensive and workable policy under Chief Rovella.

c. Review training currently provided L.E.

- Discussed under barriers.

5. New business

a. Discuss State of CT Statistics on reported hate crimes

- Saving for next time—not everyone was able to review statistics before our meeting.

6. Upcoming meeting schedule

7. Adjournment