



Any opinions expressed herein are the views of individual contributors. They should not be considered as endorsed by the Los Angeles Police Protective League or the *Thin Blue Line*.

From the Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), which reports directly to the Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC), has long been established as a part of the oversight structure for LAPD. But what exactly does the OIG do, and why is their work significant to our members?

The OIG was established through a voter-approved amendment to the City Charter in 1995 to help serve as a check and balance of sorts to the Department. The formation of the office was initially a recommendation of the (Warren) Christopher Commission, which examined the LAPD's operations following the Rodney King incident. The OIG's authority was further strengthened following the 1998 Rampart incident and subsequent reforms. Comprised of civilian employees (with the exception of one sworn sergeant II who is assigned to the office), the OIG can initiate an investigation on any topic relevant to the Department and has access to all Department facilities, records and audio/video evidence.

The OIG has had some occasions to work closely with the LAPPL in the past, serving as a confidential intake point for potentially troubling issues occurring within the Department. One such example is a

2014 report published by the OIG focusing on deployment issues, and more specifically, so-called "ghost cars." As a result of becoming aware that personnel in five Department geographic areas were over-reporting the number of officers or police cars on Patrol and available to respond to calls for service, the OIG initiated an investigation into patrol deployment, as well as the Department's overall policies, goals and strategies governing its patrol operations. The results of that investigation were presented to the BOPC in a public report along with other OIG reports.

In carrying out its responsibility to oversee the Department, the OIG focuses its work in a few primary areas. First, the office monitors and reviews all Categorical Uses of Force (CUOFs) by LAPD officers. On-call OIG staff responds directly to the scene of each CUOF incident and continues to track the ensuing investigation until its completion. The OIG then prepares a set of recommended findings for the involved officers which, in addition to the recommended findings arrived at by the Chief of Police, are submitted to the BOPC for final adjudication.

Additionally, the OIG oversees various aspects of LAPD's disciplinary process.

The office serves as a point of intake for complaints of misconduct against LAPD employees as well as commendations in support of them. The OIG also tracks and reviews Internal Affairs Group investigations to ensure objectivity, thoroughness, and consistency. Just like the public, the OIG is accessible to LAPPL members who become aware of misconduct by a Department employee or who otherwise feel they are not being treated fairly by the Department.

The OIG also conducts systemic reviews of the Department and topic-specific audits like the patrol deployment project described above. These reviews are often requested directly by the BOPC, and they generally involve an analysis of one or more aspects of LAPD operations to ensure compliance with relevant policy and law. Some completed OIG projects include: a "Review of Allegations Classified as Unbecoming Conduct," a "Report on Department Radio Interoperability," a "Review of Arrests for Violations of California Penal Code Section 148(A)(1)" and a "Review of Suicide-By-Cop Incidents." Some forthcoming areas of focus may include: an update to the OIG's prior report on National Best Practices, an audit of the Department's Metropolitan Division and a review of LAPD's Complaint Mediation Program.

Finally, the OIG conducts outreach to educate members of the Department as

well as the community about the role of the office. The OIG is often in the important position of acting as a bridge between the Department and the community, particularly in instances when either of those two groups feels some measure of skepticism toward the other. It is therefore crucial for the OIG to be open and accessible to members of the public and members of the Department alike, whether via phone, mail, email, social media, mobile app or in-person visit.

The OIG is staffed by approximately 35 professionals with diverse backgrounds relevant to the civilian oversight of law enforcement. Staff experience includes investigations, audits, legal analysis, law enforcement and policy writing. Certifications/degrees earned by various OIG staff members include juris doctorate and master's, Certified Practitioner of Oversight, and Certified Law Enforcement Auditor, among others.

According to the current Inspector General, Mark P. Smith, "Our work in overseeing the Department is well-served by maintaining an open and honest line of communication with the LAPPL. Regardless of whether or not our interests might align on a specific issue, it is important to me to have a respectful connection as opposed to only communicating in times of conflict or crisis."

To reach the OIG, please visit our website at www.oig.lacity.org or call (213) 893-6413. ❖

MHN

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

ABOUT US

MHN'S Employee Assistance Program is dedicated to understanding your unique needs and helping you:

- Manage stress
- Overcome depression
- Cope with grief and loss
- Tackle alcohol and substance abuse
- Address family and relationship issues
- Achieve a better work-life balance
- And more

IT'S | ABOUT | YOU

JUST CALL US

CALL NOW (877) 646-5275

Or Visit members.mhn.com

