

# City of Cincinnati



Interdepartmental  
Correspondence Sheet

Date 3/4/04

To Bureau, District and Section Commanders  
From Colonel Thomas H. Streicher, Jr., Police Chief  
Copies to Safety officers  
Subject CINCINNATI POLICE DEPARTMENT'S 2004 SAFETY ACTION PLAN

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## **Introduction**

In 2003, we established a target for the reduction of IWP cases to less than 33. However, we experienced an increase of +1 IWP case for a total of 34.

While we had an increase of 1 IWP case, we were successful in reducing our overall injuries for the fifth consecutive year from a high of 354 in 1999 to 233 in 2003. We also reduced our reportable vehicular accidents for the fourth consecutive year. It is imperative that we continue our commitment of providing a safe working environment for our employees.

I am again establishing a target of 33 IWP cases for 2004 and below is the plan we will implement to reach our goal. This plan was constructed after input from all of our Bureau, District and Section commanders and all safety officers.

Foot Pursuit and Arrest/Assault, Vehicle Accidents and Slip/Trip & Fall situations were responsible for 76% of our IWP cases. While we will continue in our efforts to prevent all injuries, our focus for 2004 will be in these areas.

Effective implementation of the action plans in each category discussed below is critical to the successful reduction of injuries in our Department.

## **Foot Pursuit and Arrest/Assault Situations**

We experienced **103 injuries including 17 IWP cases** in these areas last year. Action plans being implemented to aid in preventing these injuries will include:

- Following training, a taser will be issued to each sworn member of the Police Department. We anticipate complete Department implementation by this fall. Nationwide, the taser has successfully demonstrated its ability to reduce officer injury. In departments tracking information, such as Orange County Florida and Phoenix Arizona, officer injuries decreased by 80%, suspect injuries decreased by 67%, lethal force was reduced by 78%, and baton strikes down 56%. The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department estimated a liability savings of 2.5 million dollars in their first year of taser implementation.

We believe Cincinnati will see very similar successes. The taser allows an officer to avoid the physical (hands on) confrontation and in ideal situations, order an aggressor to the ground from a distance. Once fully implemented, we anticipate an increased use of the taser followed by a marked reduction in use. Even with the limited number of tasers currently in use, we have seen officers gain compliance simply by threatening the use of the taser. We fully anticipate officers will gain compliance with subjects they previously would have had to physically dominate by the mere presence or threat of taser use.

- In addition to annual firearms qualification, all sworn members below the rank of Captain will attend a firearms familiarization program designed to reinforce basic firearms skills. Also, any officers who failed to qualify during their first attempt in 2003 will receive additional days of training.
- All sworn members will continue to receive "shoot/don't shoot" training via the firearms training system (FATS). This use of force decision-making program is proving to be effective.
- The Police Academy will offer two "Vehicle Stop" seminars during the year. The course will focus on general tactics, vehicle placement and approaches aimed at reducing the overall risk associated with traffic stops.
- Two WIN seminars will be offered. These programs prepare officers to mentally, physically and emotionally win risk encounters through training designed to build the officer's confidence with their tactical skills.
- The Police Academy will continue to distribute six-minute roll call training scenarios every five-(5) weeks to the five districts, Intelligence and Inspections with emphasis on high risk situations, use of force/decision making and tactics. Through discussion, officers will focus on high-risk situations and will learn to consider both tactical and legal considerations during those confrontations.
- The Police Academy will continue to aggressively market the voluntary physical fitness program in the Department in order to improve fitness among our officers.
- The Police Academy will continue the practice of safety briefings prior to any scenario training.
- Vice Control Section will ensure that all personnel will receive training in the safe execution of search warrants to ensure job safety and to improve tactical skills.
- Inspections Section will continue to conduct reviews of critical incidents and related reports. Some overviews of the review will be presented at roll calls and the Department Staff Meetings. The intention is not to criticize, but to better enable personnel to handle future incidents.

### **Vehicular Accidents**

The Police Department experienced **14 injuries including 5 IWP cases** in this category during 2003. Although some of these cases were “not at fault” injuries, we are mindful of the potential seriousness of these types of injuries. The following action plans are being implemented:

- The Department continues its uniform disciplinary policy for employees involved in negligent accidents. The Assistant Chief assigned to Resource Bureau acts as the hearing officer in these cases to ensure the policy is being fairly and equitably utilized.
- The Police Academy has in place a remedial defensive drivers training program. It involves the utilization of the skid-car system. Employees are trained under simulated conditions of adverse road conditions. Recruits are now trained with this system and all other employees identified as having a history of negligent accidents will be retrained through this system.
- The 2003 Ford Crown Victoria, our patrol vehicle, has an improved frame which will improve front-end crash performance. Also, new shocks, suspension and rack-and-pinion steering, a completely new brake system with ABS and new tires designed to improve performance on wet and snow covered roads have been added. Finally, higher headrests on these new vehicles will provide greater support and prevent whiplash. Vehicles produced after July 2003 will have standard side air bags included along with power seats. Our Fleet Manager has been working with the garage to ensure these vehicles are placed in service as soon as possible. In addition, he will closely monitor their success and make recommended changes in our driver training to ensure safety.
- The Police Academy recently purchased a driving simulator to aid in the training of employees with driving problems. Increased efforts at training will take place in this area this year. Officers will be called off the street for short training sessions utilizing this equipment.
- Supervisors will assign habitual problem drivers to two-person units with no driving privileges. These employees will then be sent to drivers training to improve their driving techniques.
- The Police Academy staff will continue to liaison with the district commanders to utilize MVR videotapes as an excellent source of roll call training for pursuit and defensive driving purposes.
- The Inspections Section as well as first line supervision will continue to monitor use of seatbelts by Department employees while operating city vehicles.

### **Slips/Trips/Falls/Overextension/Overexertion**

We experienced **23 injuries including 4 IWP cases** in this category. It includes slips, trips, falls, lifting and carrying type injuries. In order to curb IWP cases of this type, the Department must commit to the following:

- The Police Academy staff will distribute information which will encourage overall physical awareness and fitness and provide individualized voluntary physical fitness programs for any employees who request it.
- The Police Academy will continue to make available and encourage the use of the Hammer Strength equipment as well as the newly acquired Trotter treadmill, and two stationary bikes, (an upright and a recumbent), located at the Academy.
- The Police Academy will continue its practice of assuring proper warm-up prior to any physical fitness training.
- District/Section commanders will ensure their custodians or contract employees continue in their efforts to establish cleaning sidewalks of snow and ice during inclement weather as their first priority each day.
- Our liaison (Supply Unit commander) will continue to meet with Highway Maintenance management to ensure a high priority of cleaning the parking lots of police installations during snow situations for both safety and quick egress purposes. Districts/sections have been advised to notify Supply immediately if quick action is not taken by Highway Maintenance.
- Vice Control Section will, on a random basis, audio and videotape undercover operations. These will be reviewed by supervision to ensure job safety.

### **Training Activities**

The Police Academy experienced **17 training related injuries, but only 1 IWP case** in 2003. In order to ensure a continued safe working and training environment:

- The Police Academy has modified their written Standard Operating Procedures. Modifications include safety briefings prior to all training programs. Before any physical fitness training begins, the staff will continue to ensure that participants are properly warmed up, including stretching. Prior to any defensive tactics training, the Academy staff safety officer will ensure proper safety equipment and techniques are utilized and followed.
- The Police Academy Manager, prior to use, will review all training scenarios used in either recruit or in-service training.
- Any scenario which involves physical contact will be monitored by an Academy safety officer to ensure proper safety equipment is used and safety procedures followed. The safety officer has total responsibility and authority to stop any scenario that does not meet the safety criteria.

### **Proactive Supervisory/Management Initiatives**

- We will continue to offer free, voluntary flu shots and blood pressure screening to all Department personnel to keep them physically prepared for duty and aware of their overall physical fitness.

- A building emergency plan committee has been established. It meets quarterly to update plans as needed and to seek more effective ways to provide safety for our employees while in our city facilities.
- The Department is continuing in its efforts to conduct fire and emergency drills during 2004.
- Supervisors will continue to inspect the work environment for potential safety hazards, inspect employees' personal protective equipment (PPE) for defects and ensure workplace and employee practices meet established safety standards.
- Supervisors will promptly investigate and report incidents of employee injuries or unsafe acts and take necessary corrective action. They will ensure no employee is required or permitted to work in any condition which could be rendered safe through appropriate action.
- Inspections Section will continue to investigate new and better equipment as it becomes available which would allow officers to function in a safer environment.
- The Night Chief's position will remain vigilant to identify unsafe acts and conditions which necessitate changes in policies, procedures or tactics and report those conditions to the Police Chief for review.
- The Department-wide safety officer concept continues with success. The officers meet quarterly to review injury/accident trends and make recommendations to reduce injuries. Personnel Section maintains the liaison role with the safety officers assigned to each section, disseminates training ideas and methods to improve safety in the individual sections and meets with the officers both as a group and individually to improve their abilities as safety representatives.
- Safety officers are directed to place quarterly injury accident statistical reports on bulletin boards for viewing by our employees. We believe this will keep all employees mindful of their role in reducing injuries and of management's commitment to doing the same.

We consider the safety and welfare of our employees to be an essential function of every supervisor's job duties. You will be held accountable for the successful implementation of this plan.

THS/tra