



AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Preliminary Assessment of Training Academy

March 2, 2021

Kroll

A Division of
DUFF & PHELPS

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ABOUT KROLL

Project Team



THE KROLL PROJECT TEAM

Subject Matter Experts / Project Leaders



Rick Brown

29 Years – Pennsylvania State Police
Lieutenant Colonel / Deputy Commissioner
Oversight of Internal Affairs, EEOO,
Training and Education
Governor Rendell's Executive Diversity Council



Dan Linskey

28 Years – Boston Police Department
Superintendent-in-Chief (2009-2014)
Mayor's Office of Emergency Management
Oversaw Response to Boston Marathon Bombing
Managed Response to Boston Occupy Movement
Training and Education / Community-oriented policing



Mark Ehlers

Project Leader / Kroll Managing Director,
AUSA, E.D.PA, 1996-2006
AUSA, D.D.C., 1988-2006
Internal Investigations / Best Practice Reviews
Government and university investigations
Workplace discrimination and harassment



A.J. Bingham

Austin point-of-contact
Multicultural community outreach
Liaison to civic, business, and non-profit communities
Founder / CEO, Bingham Group LLC
Serves on Boards of several non-profits



Robin Engel, PhD

Professor of Criminal Justice, University of Cincinnati
Director, UC Center for Police Research and Policy
Expert in biased-based policing / police-community
relations / problem-oriented policing



Cassi Fields, PhD

Human capital expert
Design, development and administration of HR projects
Recruitment and promotion strategies – remove
roadblocks and implicit bias in hiring and promotion
HC consulting for public service agencies



Larry Mayes

Project Advisor / Community Engagement Strategies
Civilian input – police investigations
Community Ombudsman Oversight Panel
VP of Programs, Catholic Charities of Boston
Cabinet Chief of Human Services, City of Boston
(2004-2010)

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PROJECT OBJECTIVES

APD Review – Training Academy Assessment



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

APD Review – Training Academy Assessment

- City Council Resolution 66
- Assess ability and readiness to prepare cadets for policing in a multi-ethnic, diverse urban population consistent with best practices
- Assist with developing a transformational police academy that moves away from a regimented, paramilitary culture into a learning academy that “promotes effective, innovative, and inclusive instruction that advances sustained learning for current and future officers by utilizing the most current evidence-based strategies and incorporates diverse perspectives through community partnerships” (2020 Strategic Plan)

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WORK PERFORMED

Methodology



WORK COMPLETED TO DATE

APD Review – Training Academy Assessment

KROLL REVIEWED THE FOLLOWING REPORTS AND ASSESSMENTS:

- APD Training Academy Review and Strategic Plan by Dr. Sara Villanueva
- APD Training Academy Curriculum Review by Dr. Miguel Ferguson
- Community + APD Equity Assessment Series: APD Training and Recruiting Divisions, The Peace Mill Research and Communications
- Racial Inequities and Institutional Racism, Joyce James Consulting
- Community Report: Video Review Panel
- Community Video Review Panel (CVRP): APD Training Academy Videos, Final Report
 - CVRP Summary Reports from July 2020 to November 16, 2020.

WORK COMPLETED TO DATE

APD Review – Training Academy Assessment

Over 45 interviews/meetings:

- APD and Academy leadership
- Academy instructors
- Active and retired personnel
- Former APD cadets
- Community leaders and activists
- Independent consultants and academic experts
- City Manager's Office, Office of Police Oversight, and Equity Office staff
- Community Police Review Commission

Best Practices Research

Review of documents

- Academy curricula, course content and lesson plans, instructor CVs, organizational charts, policy manuals, procedures and protocols, statistical data, cadet manuals, class schedules, recruitment materials, employee rosters, and other documentation and data

WORK STILL TO DO

APD Review – Training Academy Assessment

Additional interviews

- Academy instructors
- Recruiting Unit staff
- Recent Academy graduates
- Additional community leaders/representatives
- Others

Review and analysis of documents

Continued research

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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Diversity

- Academy leadership and supervisory staff reflects a significantly improved level of gender, racial, and ethnic diversity, particularly as to:
 - Cadet Training Unit / Learned Skills Unit supervisors
 - Recruiting Unit staff
- Instructors continue to lack diversity
- Diversity of 143rd Academy and (prospective) 144th is commendable

144TH CADET CLASS (AS OF 12/10/2020):

| Gender | Asian / Islander | Black | Hispanic | Other | White | Grand Total | Percentages |
|-------------|---------------------|-------|----------|-------|-------|----------------|-------------|
| Female | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 10 | 16 | 17% |
| Male | 4 | 10 | 29 | 3 | 33 | 79 | 83% |
| Grand Total | 5 | 13 | 31 | 3 | 43 | 95 | |
| Percentages | 5% | 14% | 33% | 3% | 45% | | |

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Diversity

- Racial Equity / Anti-Racism Workshops
 - Beyond Diversity (Dr. Glenn Singleton)
 - Groundwater Analysis of Racial Inequities (Joyce James)
- LGBTQ+ training / recruiting
- Mentorship for female cadets



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Paramilitary Culture

- Academy remains a paramilitary training model
 - Formal classroom settings
 - Highly regimented, chain-of-command
 - “Hybrid” – classroom settings / less rigid later in Academy
- **APD leadership:** paramilitary structure is essential component of police culture and paramount to ensuring cadets are attuned to the chain of command and know what to do and how to respond in crisis situations.



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Paramilitary Culture

- Academy trains cadets to be “70% guardians and 30% warriors.”
 - “We are guardians, but we have to maintain a warrior mindset to stop immediate threats when they occur.”
- “Fight Day” vs. “Will-to-Win”
- Stress Reaction Tests (SRT) vs. Team Building Exercises (TBX)



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Paramilitary Culture

- **Community Video Review Panel**
- “Us vs. them” bias manifested in the following ways:
 - An enhanced focus on officer safety over the safety of the community as a whole
 - A “warrior” versus “service” mentality in which officers see themselves as the “good guys” and the public they interact with often as “bad guys”
 - An emphasis on a kind of impossible objectivity and “professionalism” in which officers are expected not to have or show emotions and to view emotions from members of the public as problematic
 - A view of the profession as primarily concerned with exercising and maintaining control, where officers are the agents of control and the public stands in need of being controlled

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Curriculum Review

- Dr. Villanueva: Academy needs to better develop and incorporate adult learning / active learning strategies into classroom teaching
- Current focus: TCOLE / BPOC requirements
- Awaiting guidance from Organizational Training and Development Manager (ODTM)
 - Teaching Excellence Symposium
 - Transformational Training Seminar
- Past reluctance to use outside content experts
- Learning Management System (LMS)

CURRICULUM REVIEW / INCORPORATING ADULT LEARNING STRATEGIES



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Community Input

30 additional hours of community engagement (possible participants):

- Life Anew Restorative Justice
- Measure Austin
- Citizen Led Austin Public Safety Partnership (CLASP)
- Mobile Loaves & Fishes
- Mexican Consulate
- Refugee & immigrant Outreach
- Texas Association of the Deaf
- Transgender and Gender Marker Project
- Austin Justice Coalition
- Reimaging Public Safety (RPS Task Force)
- National Alliance on Mental illness (NAMI)
- The Settlement Home for Children
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- The Jeremiah Project
- The African American Youth Generation



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Community Input

- **Community Video Review Panel**
- APD / Community collaboration
 - Seven months – 110 training videos
 - Many videos were outdated and “disappointing in quality” or contained “unprofessional or sensationalistic commentary” and perpetuated harmful stereotypes “against Black and Brown communities.”
- APD accepted video content recommendations

Reimagining Public Safety



Join us and give your input on how policing should work in several real-life scenarios.

**Nov. 17th, 2020
6:30PM**

VIRTUAL - LINK IN BIO

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Cadet Injuries / Graduation Rates

CADET INJURIES

Equity Assessment report: Data from 2015-2020 shows that, “[w]hile the percentage of injuries sustained by white cadets reflects the percentage of white candidates that graduate from the academy, the percentage of injuries sustained by Black cadets (11.2%) is more than twice the percentage of Black cadets that graduate (5.19%).”

GRADUATION RATES

Graduation rates for white and Hispanic male cadets (82-83%) far exceeds the graduation rates for Black men (48.3%), Black women (52.5%), Hispanic women (52.8%), white women (66.8%), and Asian men (65.6%)
[2015 – 2020]

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Positive Takeaways

Positive Takeaways:

- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training – 40 hours
- ICAT (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics) – 10 hours
- Passionate, Committed Instructors
 - Open to co-teaching with content experts
 - E.g., History of Race and Policing in Austin
- Hiring new Organizational Development Training Manager
 - Civilian equivalent of Commander (but needs leadership backing)
 - Also plans to hire Training Specialist
- Building blocks for improved community input and participation
- Improved emphasis on diversity and racial equity (but much remains to be done)

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PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS



PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Measures

- Hire replacement for Dr. Villanueva (ODTM)
 - Provide clear mandate and authority
- Hire Training Specialist (with ODTM input)
- Begin transition to a blended, civilian and police-led Academy
- Revise schedule for 144th Academy
 - Separate Physical Training (PT) from Academics
 - Adjust behavioral modifications (report writing – not physical punishment)
- Expedite procurement of Learning Management System
 - Aim for full implementation prior to 145th Academy

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Measures (cont'd)

- Establish Internal Curriculum Review Panel
 - To include: Organizational Development Training Manager, Training Specialist, select Academy staff, and community representation
 - Incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) content into all courses
 - End siloed approach – enforce consistent messaging
- Emphasize:
 - Ethical responsibilities of policing
 - Sensitivity to legitimate community fears based in history
- Formalize process for Community Video Review Panel moving forward

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Measures (cont'd)

- Eliminate “Will-to-Win” which implicitly promotes an “us vs. them” & “win vs. lose” mentality
 - Convert to “Self-Defense” exercise and move towards end of Academy (after development of skills)**
- Eliminate use of sandpit and sandbags as “punishment” for mistakes**
- Cadets must be prepared for physical and psychological stress associated with policing
 - But humiliation tactics and physical punishment unrelated to actual police work serves little purpose
 - Some traditional paramilitary training methods and “old school” thinking must be re-examined

** APD leadership agreed to implement as of Feb. 3, 2021

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Measures (cont'd)

- Academy should proactively reach out to community leaders and activists who are willing to work productively with APD in presenting genuine community perspectives and concerns about policing
 - Community participation can break down barriers of communication, build relationships, and enhance the cadet learning experience
- Arrange for content experts from local colleges/organizations to help co-teach, in collaboration with an Academy instructor or supervisor, the DEI-related course curriculum (**co-facilitation model**)
 - E.g., “The History of Policing and Race in Austin”

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Measures (cont'd)

- Tap into existing officer base for diverse officers of exceptional skills to assist with Academy instruction in courses where a diverse perspective would be beneficial
- Consider incorporating Beyond Diversity by Dr. Glenn Singleton or the Groundwater Analysis training workshop by Joyce James Consulting LLC into Academy curriculum or as part of annual training for Academy staff
- Develop a mentorship program for all cadets (especially cadets of color) – similar to women's mentorship program

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Measures (cont'd)

- **Independent Monitor:** Require an ongoing, independent review of the 144th Academy to monitor implementation of the short-term recommendations
 - Advise on further adjustments and improvements moving forward
 - Training cadets to be community-oriented, empathetic, and compassionate guardians of the public in a dynamic and diverse city, while promoting officer health and wellness, is a constantly evolving process



PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Long-Term Measures

1

Consider a professional media literacy educator to develop effective teaching videos

2

Incorporate Academy instructors into the Field Training Officer (FTO) program for new officers

- Avoid inconsistent messaging

3

Develop strategies to enhance long-term racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of Academy staff

4

Eliminate 40-hour blocks of course content to such things as Penal Code, Traffic Code, and Arrest Search and Seizure (TCOLE approval) and shift to morning Physical Fitness training.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Long-Term Measures

5

Analyze physical fitness standards to ensure proper alignment of pre-Academy and post-Academy requirements to successful job performance

6

Develop two-week orientation program for new cadets to immerse themselves into community programs and organizations

7

Ensure that ICAT “refresher” training is delivered department-wide to all sworn APD officers and supervisors as part of mandatory in-service training

8

Health and wellness: Build-in recovery time for Academy staff between future cadet classes

WHAT'S NEXT

APD Review - Resolution 66

COMPLETE GROUP A (Assessment of Training Academy) [March 2021]

- Identify police academies and evidence-based best practices that have successfully revised training resulting in reduced force incidents and improved communication with diverse communities
- Conduct confidential interviews with officers regarding training provided by the Academy and ongoing (in-service) training
- Complete interviews, review & analysis
- Submit Final Report

GROUP B (Recruitment and Promotions / Use-of-Force / Public Interactions) [Sept. 2021]

- Assess recruitment and promotion practices to ensure racial, ethnic, and gender diversity
- Review 2,960 use-of-force incident reports and body cam videos (June – November 2019)
- Analyze aggregate data on police-citizen interactions (June – November 2019)
- Review bias and discrimination complaints for last 10 years

WHAT'S NEXT

APD Review – Resolution 66

GROUP C (Legal Analysis) [Pending Council Approval]

- Review APD compliance with race and sex discrimination employment laws
- Review incidents leading to lawsuits for alleged police misconduct over the past 10 years
- Identify any patterns of systemic racism, racist behavior, and other forms of discrimination and provide recommendations to remedy and prevent patterns of bias

GROUP D (APD Officer Communications Review) [Pending Council Approval]

- Review all APD electronic communications and public posts on social media platforms (including posts made using pseudonyms or anonymously) within the last 5 years
- Identify electronic communications evidencing explicit and implicit prejudiced behavior: bias, racism, homophobia, gender bias and other forms of discrimination

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QUESTIONS?

APD Review – Training Academy Assessment

