

MEMORANDUM



POLICE DEPARTMENT

DATE: October 14, 2025

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

FROM: Rafael Quintero, Chief of Police
BY: Adam Cornils, Deputy Chief
Viviana Garzon, Police Administrator

SUBJECT: Response to the Office of Independent Review Group Recommendations
in the 2024 Annual Report of the Independent Police Monitor

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Independent Police Monitor agreement with the City of Burbank, the Office of Independent Review (OIR) Group conducted its annual review and analysis of Burbank Police Department (Department). The review covered areas such as critical incidents, use of force incidents, vehicle pursuits, and the Department's Field Training Program. The Department values OIR's thorough evaluation as an important tool for continuous improvement and for ensuring the delivery of high-quality public safety services to the Burbank community.

DISCUSSION

The 2024 annual report provided 16 recommendations. Below is the Department's response to each of the OIR Group's recommendations:

Recommendation 1:

BPD should reinforce the principle that intake interviews with complainants are primarily intended to acquire a full understanding of their allegations and concerns – and not as a forum for rebuttal or defense of officer actions. Page 11

The Department generally agrees with this recommendation and will incorporate it into upcoming supervisor training sessions. The Department also recognizes the value to be had in dialogue between supervisors and complainants, where clarifying

misunderstandings or asking probing questions may be necessary, while stopping short of defensive rebuttals or arguments.

Recommendation 2:

BPD should address suboptimal performance that emerge in the context of complaint cases, even when the identified issues don't rise to the level of formal policy violations.

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The Department agrees with this recommendation. In 2025, the Department has been addressing suboptimal performance uncovered during administrative investigations, which do not amount to formal policy violations, via directed counseling / training conversations, which are then documented in a comment card and side memo associated to the investigations.

Recommendation 3:

BPD should refine its agency-wide understanding of “de-escalation” techniques to maintain emphasis on tactics and strategies that lessen the likelihood of physical force being necessary. *Page 16*

The Department will incorporate this recommendation into upcoming supervisor training sessions.

Recommendation 4:

BPD should encourage supervisors to prioritize the objective acquisition of detailed statements of individuals upon force was used and other witnesses where possible. *Page 17*

The Department agrees with this recommendation and will incorporate it into upcoming supervisor training sessions.

Recommendation 5:

BPD should continue to include recorded interviews with arrestees and civilian witnesses as part of its routine CIRB process. *Page 17*

The Department agrees with this recommendation. The Department is currently revamping its process for the investigation of critical incidents, with a focus on optimizing the use of available technology and software platforms. This will eliminate steps and allow supervisors to directly link and attach recordings to the investigative file, instead of the more cumbersome practice of downloading and copying recordings to media devices such as compact discs and USB drives, which creates opportunities for files to be overlooked.

Recommendation 6:

BPD should explore “micro training” in defensive tactics to provide more regular review of this most commonly used force option. Page 19

The Department agrees with this recommendation and will explore having the Training Bureau develop a curriculum of Defensive Tactics training sessions, suitable for regular presentation in briefings and Roll Call trainings.

Recommendation 7:

BPD should ensure that current training of its police service dogs is reflective of evolving legal standards and societal expectations and should ensure that a rigorous review of bite incidents continues to be part of its CIRB process. Page 22

The Department has a robust training regimen for its police service dogs, handlers, and supervision, which includes ongoing legal updates. The Department recognizes the potential concerns, as well as the tremendous value, in the effective deployment of police service dogs, and will continue to ensure a rigorous review of their deployments.

Recommendation 8:

BPD should routinely review Taser Deployment Logs as part of their protocols. Logs that reflect anomalies, such as trigger rejections, or multiple activations should prompt supervisory commentary on justification, tactical reasoning, and any necessary intervention. Page 25

The Department is now including the Training Coordinator in the review process, prior to the overall CIRB meeting, and will ensure the deployment logs are reviewed and issues as mentioned are reconciled in the process.

Recommendation 9:

BPD should consider eliminating the concept of Assessment Period from its policy. Page 31

The Department agrees with this recommendation and eliminated the “Assessment Period” concept from its pursuit policy during an update published in August, 2025.

Recommendation 10:

BPD should conduct frequent and repeated scenario-based vehicle pursuit training during daily briefings as practicable to reinforce best practices. Page 33

The Department agrees with this recommendation and will examine opportunities to incorporate tabletop exercises, video reviews, and other scenario-based training vignettes into its Roll Call training schedule.

Recommendation 11:

Before drafting an updated pursuit policy, BPD should clearly define its “pursuit philosophy,” and use this exercise to develop policy, training, and supervisory expectations that align with this philosophy. Page 35

The Department will discuss and define its “pursuit philosophy” during upcoming meetings of the Management Team and Executive Staff as it seeks to refine its pursuit policy to meet public safety expectations in the coming year.

Recommendation 12:

BPD should add a structured community engagement or service component to its training program and evaluate its impact through trainee feedback and supervisor observations. Page 42

The Department emphasizes trainees’ participation in community engagement activities. Training units are regularly incorporated and expected to participate in events such as “Coffee with a Cop,” National Night Out, and other community events. The Department will ensure the Field Training Program is documenting the trainees’ participation, observations, and feedback in their evaluations and reports.

Recommendation 13:

BPD should consider incorporating formal problem-solving exercises or written self-assessments from trainees to promote reflective learning and assign trainees a community-based project to foster broader thinking. Page 52

The Department will explore incorporating problem-solving and self-assessment exercises in Field Training. Based on the structured nature of the Field Training Program and the need to expose the trainee to a variety of investigative and field procedures, the Department expects the community-based project suggestion to be better suited to incorporation during the time when an officer has graduated from Field Training and is working independently on probation, under the guidance of a field supervisor.

Recommendation 14:

BPD should develop a structured program for trainees to meet regularly to debrief and for peer support. Page 55

The Department is currently working to enhance its overall peer support program and will explore incorporating a structured program for trainees as part of this.

Recommendation 15:

BPD should implement a short “check-in” meeting with each trainee class by a psychologist or peer support team, separate from evaluation, to discuss stress and coping. Page 55

The Department will explore including this in the training time that trainees undergo in between their graduation from the Academy and immersion in the Field Training Program.

Recommendation 16:

BPD should develop periodic wellness sessions for FTOs to vent frustrations or share support strategies for themselves. Page 55

The Department will explore incorporating this suggestion periodically during its scheduled monthly FTO meetings.

CONCLUSION

The OIR Group’s annual review provides significant value to the Burbank community by ensuing accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement within the Department. By evaluating critical areas of operations, the review enhances public safety, promotes equity, and reinforces the trust between the Department and the community.

ATTACHMENT:

None