

CITY OF VANCOUVER

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POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Chief of Police

DATE: March 15, 2010
TO: Pat McDonnell, City Manager
FROM: Clifford Cook, Chief of Police
SUBJECT: Police Department Update for Mayor and Council

Objective

Provide a quarterly update on the implementation of recommendations from the Matrix study.

Background

On August 10, 2009 a two-hour Council Workshop provided findings and recommendations from a review of the Vancouver Police Department, which identified trends relating to disciplinary actions, decision making, and the cultural environment. Council received a full copy of the report, which included a number of recommendations for enhancing organizational management, internal and external communications, professional development and training, complaints and internal investigations, disciplinary processes, and policies and procedures.

On November 3, 2009 the second quarterly update was presented to council via a memo which highlighted the current projects, upcoming projects and next steps related to the report. The original report encompassed 35 recommendations which have been expanded into 38 separate recommendations.

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on those recommendations.

Completed (21 recommendations)

- External Communication:
 - Develop a proactive public information and media relations effort
 - Develop a forum with visibility of the Police Chief and command staff
 - Work with the City website administrator to ensure that an interactive website
- Establish a Training Committee
- Develop a protocol to use information from the “sustained” dispositions
- High liability issues
- Exit interviews
- Negotiations Team Sub-Committee Work Products
 - A new 28-page Internal Investigations Policy

- A separate Administrative Leave Policy
- A new Grievance Procedure
- Revise the Police Department's home page
- Continue the role of the assigned investigator as an investigator only
- Each month that an employee continues on administrative leave the Chief should present to the City Manager for his/her review
- Continue the practice of the current Chief of not removing an employee from specialty assignments
- Continue involvement of the Lieutenants in the decision making process
- Reduce the staffing level in the Professional Standards Unit
- Remove the Chapter 20 policy regarding the complaint investigations process from the MOU and the negotiations process. (Rejected by VPOG)
- Establish quarterly meetings between the Chief and Lieutenants
- Set Chief and command staff quarterly meetings with non-supervisory personnel to address issues specific to the employee group.
- Set an executive team objective to spend a minimum of four hours per month at the line level for ride-a-longs or personal work-site visits.
- Develop a monthly newsletter to all Department members from the Office of the Chief.

Under Review (11 recommendations)

- Policies, Procedures and Organizational Management
 - Policy manual update
- Organizational Management
 - Revise Mission, Vision, Values Statement
- Develop a written Department succession planning document
- Negotiations Team Sub Committee Work Products
 - Currently working on the Discipline Matrix and a Discipline Review Board; and are continuing to work on the details for those.
- Develop written guidelines, similar to a "disciplinary matrix"
- Revise the "To Be Completed by Decision Maker" tracking form
- Develop a state specific internal affairs investigation course.
- Re-establish regularly scheduled, agenized meetings between the Chief and the VPOG.
- Establish quarterly meetings between the Chief and Sergeants
- Develop a Friday "rap sheet" delivered to all Department members discussing Department issues and events that occurred during the week from the Office of the Chief.
- Develop an electronic bulletin board

Pending Contract Ratification (6 recommendations)

- Increase the time allowed to file minor complaints from 14 to 30 days
- Revise the Chapter 20 policy
- Revise Department policy to accept anonymous complaints
- Establish a 14 day target for completion of command staff review
- Re-establish a process that allows an employee to appeal the Police Chief's decision to terminate his/her employment to the City Manager.
- Establish an input and review process before discipline / punishment is imposed

Solution and Next Steps

The original Matrix report was presented to council on July 20, 2009. Generally, departmental reform efforts require considerable effort and time. In 9 short months we have managed to review, complete and negotiate over 35 recommendations, of which 21 have been completed. This is a noteworthy accomplishment.

Future Matrix status updates will be provided to Council each quarter or as requested. Requests for additional information can be referred to Chief Cook.