



King County

Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO)

Date: March 7, 2019
To: KCSO Training Leaders
From: Deborah Jacobs, Director, Office of Law Enforcement Oversight
Re: Feedback on 2019 de-escalation training plans

Thank you for welcoming me to the training again yesterday. It was evident that a number of improvements were made to the training since last week, and also that you will continue to develop it.

I appreciate everyone's hard work and expertise in pulling this training together and hope that the training team will receive the feedback below in the context of overall appreciation for the great work you've done in short timeframe. Here are further observations and recommendations:

Observations on De-escalation Review

- The presentation is a work in progress. The key challenge is that it seeks to squeeze too much information into one hour.
- Because there is an emphasis on writing OWS, violence de-escalation review, LEED and Procedural Justice (the centerpieces of the budget request) receive very little discussion. I question whether this will be sufficient to satisfy the Council's budget proviso.
- I appreciate that you added a slide covering LEED/Procedural justice, but also noticed that the amount of discussion those concepts received actually decreased from in last week's beta test.
- There was no discussion of de-escalation being used when it's safe and feasible, which has been a key point in other de-escalation trainings.
- The presentation of information about use of force policy needs development and clarity. I don't think that students received adequate explanation or demonstration of the policy on pointing a firearms. There was no explanatory slide listing what constitutes pointing a weapon and what does not.
- There was no real connection made between the classroom/scenario work and the firearms training (attempted, but didn't hold together, probably because they really don't belong together).
- The addition of the Use of Force Narrative Guidelines and an example of an OWS are positive developments.
- The addition of the group post-scenario de-brief was a positive development.

Observations on Scenarios

- The trainers do an excellent job in post-scenario coaching. It should be part of every scenario to review the participants' verbal engagement as well as their actions with weapons.

- The live scenario used creates a circumstance in which officers *must* use force and does not allow for successful de-escalation outcomes of the scenario.

Observations on the Firearms Training

- Again, there was no real connection made between the classroom/scenario work and the firearms training.
- The introduction to the firearms training included little context for the training but significant personal commentary from the trainer including repeating that cops “don’t have protection anymore” due to I-940, and that you “can see what the 9th Circuit thinks of us,” as well as commentary about qualified immunity and other things not relevant to the training. In addition, the trainer referred to a hypothetical subject as a “douchebag.” The introduction may have set a negative tone and certainly contradicted the LEED principles touched upon in the morning. You can’t practice LEED principles and refer to subjects in derogatory ways.
- The trainer mentioned but did not fully clarify or demonstrate the policy on pointing firearms.
- Verbal content aside, the training on firearms skills seemed very important and well-done. The individual coaching is invaluable.

Recommendations

- Most strongly, as in last week’s previous feedback, I recommend removing the firearms training portion from this training and instead fully covering de-escalation, LEED and Procedural Justice, the policy Use of Force Policy change, and perhaps additional scenarios or DT. These topics are the centerpiece of the budget proposal and they’re being squeezed into just a few minutes of a presentation focused on writing OWS.

Please note, especially after seeing yesterday’s excellent training (introduction aside), OLEO sees the firearms refresher training as *essential*. However, it does not relate to the budget request/proviso and seems to be added to this training at the cost of adequate time on de-escalation and related principles. I recommend that the department explore other opportunities to get this training done, such as when people come in for requalification.

- Either change the live scenario to a de-escalation outcome scenario (instead of using force) or add another scenario that can be successfully de-escalated.
- Training team determine how to most clearly present the use of force policy with an accompanying slide and a handout with the policy/special order.
- Overall, I recommend that the trainers have a couple weeks to regroup before another class to further refine the presentation.