

Police Use of Force

Suggested Study Topics

(OLRGC - - April 22, 2015)

From Ken Wallentine's January 20 Testimony before the committee:

1. Officer Training

- a. Firearms training
- b. Intensive, scenario-based training

2. Investigating "police use of force" incidents

- a. Increase training on conducting investigations (Risk Management involvement)
- b. Increase uniformity on investigation techniques among Utah police agencies
- c. Effective training is costly
- c. Does the Legislature want to make policy in this area, like police use of force (Utah Code 76-2-404)?

3. Body-worn Cameras

- a. Studies show a psychological effect; people, both officers and public, are more careful in their behavior when they know they are on camera.
- b. Not a panacea; body-worn cameras do not have the peripheral vision humans have and therefore will not definitively resolve every incident.

4. Peace Officer Standards and Training does not administer psychological evaluations

- a. Evaluations currently left to local police agencies to do, or not to do.
- b. Should evaluations be required? By POST or by local police agencies?

From Staff:

College Level Education

- a. Current Utah POST education requirement is a high school diploma.
- b. Most large states and cities require a college degree.
- b. Studies such as the *Project on Policing Neighborhoods* have shown a high statistical correlation between use of force incidents involving officers with a college degree versus those without.
- c. In a cost-benefit study, the cost of lawsuits for excessive use of force, fatalities, and collateral damage is far greater than the minimal, additional cost of paying wages to a college educated police officer.
- d. Legislature may want to consider requiring a college degree over time, perhaps start with requiring that a POST Academy graduate have an AA or AS degree by graduation or within, for example, three years, and "grandfather" existing officers by requiring them to obtain an AA, AS, BA, or BS in a criminal justice program within a certain number of years.